This volume brings together selected extracts from the monthly letters addressed by Shri S. K. Dey, first as Community Projects Administrator and later as Union Minister for Community Development, to the Development Commissioners of the States and other workers engaged in the programme throughout the country.

These extracts afford a synoptic view of the growth of the Community Development movement from stage to stage. At the same time, they offer an intimate glimpse into the thinking underlying the changes in policy and in emphasis from time to time.

The author in his Introduction makes a rapid survey of the growth of the movement over a decade from 1952 to 1962. The appendices provide further factual information.

P-81.

62.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A Chronicle, 1954-1961

S. K. Dey

सत्यमेव जयते

Issued on behalf of

MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT,
PANCHAYATI RAJ AND CO-OPERATION
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

October 2, 1962 (Asvina 10, 1884)

PUBLISHED BY THE DIRECTOR, PUBLICATIONS DIVISION, MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING, DELHI-6 AND PRINTED BY THE MANAGER, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS, FARIDABAD

P·81

INTRODUCTION

This is not a book specially written either for a particular clientele or for the lay public. As the title implies, this book is a chronicle, a compilation to be precise, of thoughts and actions on the Community Development Programme spread over a period of time. The publication is intended as a supplement to others in the line which have already dealt with the philosophy and objectives of the programme. It should be of special interest to workers engaged in the various sectors of the community development movement, both official and non-official. It should be of help also to scholars, both Indian and foreign, who wish to have an initimate and personal knowledge of how the programme developed from stage to stage, the thinking behind the major changes in policies, and, to some extent, of the motive force that enabled a mere trickle, so to speak, of a decade ago to grow into a mighty river engulfing more than a tenth of the world's population today.

The Community Development Programme in India, as the reader perhaps is aware, started in a limited number of areas spread out in all the States under the Indo-U.S. Technical Co-operation Agreement signed early 1952. Conditions in India vary from one extreme to the other between different parts of the country. It was but inevitable that there would be wide diversities in the detailed implementation of the programme from area to area. Yet, to survive and endure, the programme had to have a fundamental unity of purpose and approach. It had, in other words, to grow something like the culture of India, with wide variations in its external manifestations and yet a common under-current from which it could draw its nourishment. Meetings, seminars, conferences, manifestos and circulars do help bring about some identity of purpose. But in the parlour of the Government these suffer from serious limitations. At a psychological moment the author of this publication hit upon an inno-

vation by accident. The innovation was a series of intimate monthly communications by him as the chief administrator of the programme to all his associates grappling with the task, directly or indirectly, across the wide canvas of India.

As a medium of communion written communication suffers from many a handicap. In a government administration the handicap grows even worse. Attempts were made throughout, nevertheless, to use the medium of the monthly communication as a vehicle for the faithful transmission of thoughts and impulses as they rose in the mind of the author. The communications were addressed formally to the Development Commissioners. But they did not remain confined so. Several thousand of these went out to other functionaries in response to demands from them. The personal element in these communications apparently did find an echo in kindred hearts. The cumulative volume grew over the years. The programme expanded; new areas came under operation; new workers came in who were strangers to the programme and to the processes of evolution which the programme had undergone. A wide demand grew for copies of the letters from the very beginning. They were brought out in three volumes under the title "Random Thoughts".

The programme will soon cover the sub-continent as a whole. There will be workers of varied kinds in hundreds of thousands. There will be newcomers to the programme today as also tomorrow. They would like to have a perspective of the programme if they are to play their role effectively and adequately. An ideal publication in this behalf perhaps would be a diary of events and thoughts from month to month ever since the inception of the programme if one could attempt it. Unfortunately, no one other than the author of this publication has had a continuity with this programme ever since it was conceived, or a perspective of the programme as it operated in the country both in depth and width. A diary not being practical, ultimate resort had to be had to a chronicle like the one that follows. An attempt has been made in this publication to condense the thoughts communicated in the letters, so as to avoid repetition to the extent

possible, also thoughts and ideas which are no longer as relevant. In the abridged form, these ideas are expected to travel to the largest number of workers in the Community Development Programme and also to others who are interested in the growth and progress of this life-giving movement.

Community Development, as already mentioned, came in the wake of the Indo-U.S. Technical Co-operation Agreement signed early 1952. The programme was designed to create new administrative units for rural development called the Community Development Blocks with a population of 60,000 to 80,000 in normal areas and 20,000 to 30,000 in desert or hilly regions or areas inhabited predominantly by tribal population. The Block was to be headed by an administrator called the Block Development Officer to co-ordinate the services of extension officers in diverse fields of rural development such as Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Village Industries, Public Health, Social Education, Rural Engineering, Co-operation and Women and Children's Programme. The extension officers were to function through ten multipurpose village level workers called Gram Sevaks each serving approximately ten villages. There would besides be women workers called Gram Sevikas to work for women and children's welfare under an appropriate extension officer called the Mukhya Sevika. Special funds and equipment were placed at the disposal of the block to serve as the nucleus resources for development.

Soon after the programme began, demands came for its wide multiplication. The demand grew so heavy that it was impossible to resist. To correspond with the demand and a relatively quicker spread of the programme, came the reduced version of the original Community Development Programme. It was called the National Extension Service. The National Extension Service, abbreviated as N.E.S., offered the same nucleus staff but a reduced quantum of financial allotment. NES implied a network of extension services for rural development linking the village through appropriate technical hierarchies up to the national level. The idea was that the country as a whole would be covered by NES over a period of 8 to 10 years. The Community Develop-

ment Programme as an intensive dosage of technical and financial assistance would be offered to these areas progressively over a period of time. As originally conceived, the Community Development Programme was intended to last for a period of three years to be followed by another three-year period of post-intensive operation.

The programme had originally started primarily as a Government-sponsored one. It was to be operated almost exclusively by the Government servants envisaged under the new pattern of administration, namely the National Extension Service. Soon it was found that the programme could not go far on this basis. People should be brought within the orbit of planning if they are to be a willing party to implementation. Block Advisory Committees consisting of representatives of the village people, including members of the State Legislature and the Parliament from the area, offered the answer during the first stage of this development. It was however discovered very soon that the Block Advisory Committees did not grow to be the vital instruments envisaged. Non-official representatives of the people could take interest only if the consensus of the advice they offered could be guaranteed to be followed as a mandate. The Block Advisory Committee was accordingly redesignated as the Block Development Committee and assurances were given that the advice of the Block Development Committee would be binding on the block organisation unless it went against the letter and spirit of the programme.

The Government of India meantime appointed a high-powered study team to look into the whole programme of Community Development and make appropriate recommendations. The study team recommended early in 1958 that the Community Development Programme called for radical reorientation in its outlook. The team recommended the abandonment of the programme of attenuated services and facilities envisaged under the original scheme of National Extension Service. Instead they advocated the pattern of community development to run for two successive

periods of five years each—first stage and second stage—with appropriate financial assistance accordingly. The programme, they said, should cover the country by 1963. The committee went a step further and suggested that a programme which involved the day-to-day life of the people could only be implemented by them. It was inevitable that the organisation implementing the programme must vest in popular institutions themselves. Thus came the new concept of Panchayati Raj—interwoven democracy—providing for the extension of the two tiers of government theretofore (one at the centre and the other at the State level) to three more tiers along the line (the District, Block and the Village), with responsibilities tailored at each level for the progressive growth of the will and competence of the people. The Gram Sabha grew thus to be the base of the new system, serving as an open forum for all the adult citizens of the village, with the Panchayat acting as the executive on its behalf.

The panchayats in a Community Development Block were to be linked up to the next higher tier called the Block Panchayat Samiti at the Block level, taking the entire responsibility for the Community Development Programme and for guiding and directing the NES organisation employed within its jurisdiction. The Community Development Blocks in a district were to be linked together in the Zilla Parishad which would consist of the representatives of the Block Panchayat Samiti, with the members elected from the district to the State Legislature and the Parliament acting as members of the Zilla Parishad in an ex-officio capacity. Thus grew the concept "Gram Sabha to Lok Sabha" which has since been spreading throughout the country and attracting the attention of the world.

This publication starts from New Year's day, 1954. It ends on the New Year eve of 1962. A decade from 1952 to 1962 sees the conception of the Community Development Programme and the coverage by it of the bulk of rural India. Within the brief span of ten years the programme which started with Government on top promises to vest itself in its entirety in institutions of the people growing from the very roots. One chapter is over. A

new chapter begins. The character and the colour of the new chapter hereafter can be determined only by the people themselves. The original initiative which trickled down from the Prime Minister spread out with all its attendant attenuations to the far ends of the country. We are now at the beginning of the reverse traffic. Initiative and impulses flowing from the farthest corner of the sub-continent with thousands of years of urges dammed heretofore, seek new outlets. A certain slovenliness of conduct here and there is inevitable in such a countrywide movement. But if the core of the nation is in sound health, the movement will for certain find a concerted direction.

The author had in his residence at Delhi an ancient tree which stood in the way of his gardening plans. He had the tree felled. The entire trunk was removed. Only the stump was left standing on the ground about a foot high. Four winters and summers have already passed over the seemingly dead stump. But even today, new shoots come out of the roots of the same tree at different spots in a radius up to 50-60 feet. The roots of the tree had struck solidly in mother earth and are still there. The removal of the entire trunk has meant virtually nothing to the organism. Left alone, the ground would be plastered with a thousand new trees turning it into a woodland. Indian culture survived the ravages of centuries, so also the people of India, because they had their roots deep down in mother earth. Emperors and dynasties came and went. People remained, so also their culture. This is obviously what the Prime Minister had in view when he asked the Panchayat representatives at Bangalore who had gathered to meet him in a Sammelan, to give a resounding answer to the question "After Nehru What" through the effective operation of the Panchayati Raj institutions throughout the sub-continent.

True, the Community Development Programme had begun from the top. But Panchayati Raj, Sahakari Samaj and Samuhik Vikas are concepts as old as man himself. They are only draped in the garments of today. The new chapter is intended to revive and revitalise the roots of India so that the new saplings which

sprout from the soil of India hereafter, can live and sing the glory of the cosmos in the free air and sun once again. This publication is an attempt to offer in a nutshell the touch of the song and travail met in the first chapter of this epic journey.

S. K. Dey

New Delhi
July 23, 1962.

CONTENTS

		Page
I.	A Government Programme of Extension ..	1
II.	Towards a People's Movement	61
III.	Panchayati Raj	89
IV.	A New Dawn	113
	Appendices	131
	Glossary	140
	Index	141

I

A GOVERNMENT PROGRAMME OF EXTENSION

[JANUARY 1, 1954]

LAST night I tried to light a fire, for the first time in the winter. Because of the afternoon shower the logs had got thoroughly drenched. So the servant and I collected some scraps of paper and a few chips of dry wood. We prepared the fire-place with a number of wet logs spaced over the small lump of dry chips. The paper scraps were lighted. Soon the small chips caught fire and transmitted warmth to the wet logs, and there was a glorious fire. It continued for hours.

I could not help drawing an obvious parallel. A few pieces of dry wood do not create a fire. But if they are combined with a big heap there certainly can start a conflagration. We seem to be going through something like the same process. The isolated Community Projects which we started on October 2, 1952, were not enough to start a conflagration by themselves. But with the 500 blocks which there are today, and the 1,200 to 1,500 into which they will expand in the course of the next two years, the situation will be different. We can then expect the conflagration to burn the rust that clogs the Government machinery today. In brief, quality is not enough. Quality has to combine with quantity, so that quantity by its very weight can bring about a qualitative change.

We seem destined for an expansion faster than we might like. Nothing like this has happened before. Nothing like this will happen again—may be for many a generation. I am proud to be an infinitesimal cog in this giant motion. I know you will be, too. I wish you success. I wish you could make greater use of me and my comrades at this end.

Expenditure on Salaries or Works?

People in certain areas have already begun to ask whether the Government machinery really means to fulfil its own obligations or it wishes to continue getting only the people to do the digging, itself absorbing the bulk of the expenditure in the form of salaries and allowances. Such areas are few today. But they will spread unless we are vigilant.

We do not propose to cut down staff expenditure. In fact, we wish to increase it. But the ratio of expenditure on staff has to be kept down as compared to the overall expenditure, and this can only be done if we can increase the tempo of the works programme. You will do me a personal favour if you can tell me what help I can render you from this end to assist you in this vital matter.

The items on which there is a conspicuous shortfall in expenditure are : Irrigation, Cottage Industries, Communications and Education.

In the field of Communications the people have done a tremendous lot already. Therefore, it is now for the Government to do its part of the programme.

Irrigation, I realise, requires detailed planning. By this time, I hope, you will have succeeded in doing something about it. If you are short of staff, you may let me know. I understand there is surplus staff in some of the States. I shall try to help.

In the field of Village Industries, we can certainly try the brick-kiln as an invariable feature, so also poultry. We can also try to strengthen the existing artisans by giving them training and supplying them with improved tools.

Education normally should present no problem.

Block Headquarters

I cannot help mentioning that I find that some of the States are not taking full advantage of the nucleus they can create in the Block Headquarters for future townships, which are vital to our development. While planning for the Block Headquarters,

as we discussed during the First Development Commissioners' Conference held in Delhi, it is desirable to site the Cottage Industries Centre, the Hospital, the Veterinary Hospital, the High School, the Seed Store and Marketing Centre, Agricultural Farm, Poultry Breeding Farm, Block Headquarters Office, and the staff quarters, in one central place, preferably near the Police Headquarters or Thana so that the relics of the Police State could be sublimated through the establishment of all these fundamental welfare activities. In many States I find that these centres are being located at different places. Urbanisation has come to stay, however much some of us may dislike it. Therefore, the obvious course is to plan for a healthy growth of urban areas. This we can do if we take advantage of the facilities offered by the programme and plan wisely.

[FEBRUARY 5, 1954]

The Government of India have budgeted an expenditure of Rs. 107 crores over the Plan period for the Community Projects and National Extension Service. Out of this sum we incurred only an expenditure of about Rs. 2 crores during the first year of operation. If the present rate of expenditure continues there is hardly any likelihood of our spending more than five to six crores during the current year. Meantime, a large number of schemes, especially those relating to large-scale industries and multi-purpose projects, are being postponed to the next Five Year Plan for want of funds. It is being argued, irrefutably, that if these schemes could be implemented it would mean appreciable relief in the matter of unemployment and a significant contribution towards the prosperity of the nation. You will appreciate how totally wrong it will be on our part to block these funds and stop them from being used for other pressing objectives.

The question for immediate consideration, therefore, is whether we should reduce the provision of funds in the Community Projects or there are ways by which we can speed up the expenditure to the required level. You will agree with me that the needs of our villages are great in regard to the items of deve-

lopment visualised under our programme. In fact, even with the expenditure of the total amount provided, we shall only be touching the fringe of the problem. Shall we be justified in cutting down these limited funds just because we cannot spend them? There must obviously be something fundamentally wrong with the basic structure of our administration if we cannot gear it up for the budgeted expenditure even after a period of one year and three months.

The New Role of Collectors

From my experience of the working of the programme in some of the States I have visited recently, I am convinced that this programme, at the rate at which it is expected to expand, can be adequately supervised only by the Collectors in the districts. Therefore, it will mean in practice that the Collectors instead of functioning merely as Deputy Commissioners in matters of law and order and revenue, will have to become, in addition, the Deputy Development Commissioners for the districts. They will necessarily have to be vested with adequate powers for giving administrative approval and expenditure sanction. In other words, the powers that are now being exercised by Deputy Development Commissioners at the Headquarters will have to be delegated to the Collectors if delays are to be eliminated and if the Collectors are to feel the full impact of responsibilities in respect of this programme.

Seminars

We have already held one inter-State seminar of project staff at Batala. The second seminar, which is being held at Gandhigram for southern India, started yesterday. The third one will be held at Rajgir for the eastern region. We propose to have two more seminars for the rest of the country, and thereafter hold a conference of Development Commissioners.

A question that is exercising us is that of holding State-wise or regional seminars for the non-official members of the Project Advisory Committees. My tentative thinking is that we should

hold these seminars for a period of about five days in the Extension Training Centres. If the members of the Project Advisory Committees, especially the non-officials, are to play the role expected of them, it is of the utmost importance that they get a proper orientation in the programme such as we propose for our officials. The syllabus for the seminar will be a condensed version of the one we have drawn up for the Block Development Officers, to which will be added the problems in the implementation of the programme as experienced by non-officials. Could you let me have your views ?

Training of BDOs

I am happy to announce that we are practically set for beginning the first course of training for the Block Development Officers with effect from the target date, namely April 1, 1954. You will, of course, receive official communications, allocating seats for your offices. I am extremely eager to ensure that the programme of training will constitute more or less a symposium on all that we know today of the Community Development Programme in India. It is not unlikely that I shall have to call upon you, from time to time, depending on your convenience, to participate in practical instruction on the spot in the course of the training programmes.

Students' Camps

We are again trying to work up students' camps on a large scale for work in Community Projects during the holidays. Some States are trying to organise this programme through village school teachers teaming with students of high and middle schools (approximately at the rate of one teacher for every five to ten students), and going out to the villages with a definite programme of social education, manual work on roads, drainage, etc. Money earmarked for the students' camps was not fully utilised last year. Could we make a more earnest effort to enlist the participation of school teachers and students in our work this year ?

[MARCH 16, 1954]

I have been receiving news lately of nervous breakdown in quite a number of our key employees in the field. This is a bad sign. It shows that we are reaching the limit of our resilience and that the past is beginning to prove far too much of a halter round the neck. We must do something with the past, so that it does not pull us down before we complete the long route yet ahead. I have done a good bit of stock-taking and heart-searching with my colleagues in the Community Projects Administration. We are determined to ease operations, and remove all avoidable bottlenecks. As a first step in this direction we have taken the following measures :

(a) Your budget will no longer have to be approved by the CPA. It will be vested almost entirely in the State Government.

(b) Complete authority for purchase of essential equipment and supplies has been vested in the State Government.

My studies during recent weeks reveal that our project work cannot move smoothly, even after all these relaxations, unless the State Governments ensure the following essential pre-requisites :

(a) Full delegation of powers, financial as well as technical, to the Development Commissioners as recommended by us from time to time.

(b) Vesting of full responsibility for the programme in the Collectors of districts, with corresponding delegation of powers for administrative approval, technical and expenditure sanction.

(c) Complete integration of the various development departments around the Development Commissioners, Collectors and Block Development Officers.

(d) Preparation of a budget for each Block by the Development Commissioners with the help of the Heads of Departments at State Headquarters, by the Collectors along with the District Development Depart-

ment Heads, by the Block Officers along with the Block Advisory Committee Members, and its approval by the State Development Committee within a maximum of six months following inauguration.

At the instance of the Prime Minister, the Chanda Committee has already begun making a study of Rules and Procedures with a view to simplification. This should help eventually, although it will take a little time. Meantime, I am arranging with the active support of the Finance Minister to obtain the services of a very senior and experienced Finance Officer who, together with some representatives of the CPA, can make a sample study of those Rules and Procedures which apply to our Projects. I hope that as a result of this study we shall be able to make further recommendations for the simplification of our Rules and Procedures.

Non-official Participation

We have so far had participation in our work from agencies like students and teachers from schools and colleges, members of Rotary Clubs, Bharat Sevak Samaj and National Cadet Corps. I have just discovered an innovation started in the State of Hyderabad, where policemen from the Reserve Force are being utilised for building roads and doing sanitation and other work in villages covered by our programme. This appears to be a very healthy move and is bound, if carefully handled, to bridge the gap that still persists between the people and the people's servants.

Recently, Parliament Members from out of our Project Advisory Committees met me at Delhi. We exchanged ideas without reservation. The MPs appeared extremely eager to play their role as representatives of the people. They said that they could do much more provided they received notice of Project and Block Advisory Committee meetings sufficiently in advance, with regular copies of Reports and Returns on our work in the respective project areas. They were very appreciative of the enthusiasm that has already been generated in project areas and the manner in which Government servants are discharging their

assignments. They are aware of the grave deficits in governmental expenditure and are eager to help the project staff and the Development Commissioner with the full weight of their influence if only they are kept in close touch with our progress, and with the difficulties we are experiencing. To me it appeared to be a very promising attitude, and I would urge you to take advantage of the services of these representatives of our people who must come and play their part in this fateful programme if they are to justify themselves. MPs and Members of State Legislatures have done sterling work in a number of projects. There is no reason why we should not induce all of them to do likewise.

Incentives for Gram Sevaks

Certain States have introduced a system of issuing certificates of merit to deserving Gram Sevaks as incentives for good work. One State, namely Bombay, has gone even further and introduced the system of increments and promotions to Gram Sevaks who have earned three such certificates of merit. I would commend this procedure for your consideration.

[APRIL 15, 1954]

From our experience at Rajgir and Aurangabad we are convinced that the site of the seminar has an important bearing on the seminar itself. We should take every opportunity to hold our seminars, whether at District, State or regional level, at significant sites connected with the history and culture of our country. Apart from anything else, it goes a long way to weave us into a common fabric. Even as tomorrow can only be based on today, today has to be anchored to yesterday if we are to avoid pitfalls.

Our programme is expanding sufficiently to justify future seminars, of project staff in particular, being held State-wise. This may mean that the next series of seminars at the inter-State level will be based on the Development Commissioners and the Collectors on one side, and the non-official members of Project Advisory Committees on the other.

Of all the subjects handled by us, the subject of Social Education still retains an element of the nebulous. An attempt is being made by the CPA to draw up a manual on social education with a view to concretising the assignment of the Social Education Organiser. You may find it to your advantage to hold State-wise seminars of Social Education Organisers, to clarify thinking on the subject. This has already been done in one or two States, I understand, with considerable success.

Attracting Women Workers

I am trying hard to attract women to our project work. I shall let you know the results in a few weeks. Meantime, may I suggest a few advance increments for women Social Education Organisers, or alternatively a slight relaxation in qualifications for the same scale of pay? This is being tried in certain States. The results, I gather, have been promising.

The Community Development Programme in its present form visualises 12 Village Level Workers, of whom 10 are to be Gram Sevaks and two Gram Sevikas. The intention was to make a beginning with two women workers. If the scheme proves successful we may consider whether or not it is feasible to team up every Gram Sevak in a Community Development Programme with a corresponding Gram Sevika specially trained for work with women. A scheme for the training of Gram Sevikas is already on the anvil. In certain projects excellent work is being done by Gram Sevikas who have been recruited from the Kasturba Trust. I recommend a trial on the same lines in every project where Kasturba Trust workers may become available.

Location of NES Blocks

The siting of NES Blocks seems to have created a lot of trouble for us all. It has been stated by the Planning Commission: "It is proposed that the National Extension Service be organised in units of one or more Development Blocks so as to constitute a compact administrative charge under a Sub-Divisional Officer or a Sub-Collector. Normally, an administrative unit under a Sub-Divisional Officer will comprise 300 villages."

I find, however, that except in a few States, NES Blocks have been located singly, spread all over the districts. The reasons underlying this may have been geographical, linguistic, political or other. Where also, for instance, the existing Firka Development Blocks in Madras and Andhra, or the conversion of the existing 15 Pilot Projects into NES Blocks, had to be taken into account, the scattering of the Blocks in different districts was no doubt inevitable. But the scattering of the Blocks had added to the difficulties of supervision. It has also prevented the integration of all the development staff within the administrative unit, which was one of the prime objectives of the scheme. Work in these blocks is still to develop its normal potential, despite the efforts of the project staff. We should try to correct this handicap in the future allotments of blocks. I feel so strongly on the subject that I am prepared to go to the farthest and to assist you and your Minister in ensuring that this important recommendation of the Planning Commission is given effect to, despite the pulls in the opposite direction you may encounter from many quarters.

Garlands and Bands

If I may have your indulgence, I would like to touch on a rather delicate point. It is about the garland and *toran* business. In a number of project areas I find people wasting their energy in creating gateways, buntings, etc. A lot of money is also wasted in buying garlands for honouring official visitors to the Community Projects. Sometimes policemen are kept waiting far from their beats for the privilege of presenting a guard of honour. It is difficult to resist on the spot these overtures of the people. Yet I find it highly embarrassing and in a way very demoralising.

I hope you will agree with me that no man other than a son-in-law on the day of wedding has a right to receive garlands from people or to be received with band parties and all the rest. I do not know how these habits came into existence. I suppose that in a way these are the legacies of the feudal and colonial

regime we have just left behind. It should be our endeavour at all costs to wean people away from these soul-killing practices. I know from personal experience that our Ministers also find these highly embarrassing, although on the spot they feel as helpless as many of us do. In Community Project areas we should make a special effort to see that people use their energy for doing work which is good for themselves and get us to share in the same sacrament, rather than tempt us to act as the tin-gods which all of us in weaker moments are prone to imagine ourselves to be. There certainly are traditional ways of honouring a visitor : through an old lady or a small girl applying *kum kum* on the forehead, or in other ways which can combine dignity with grace and be free from noisy demonstrations. The surplus energies of the village people can be effectively utilised in organising dramas or music which all can share together.

I feel that I have a particular right to feel this way. I was myself in charge of a small project for a number of years. That project had the good fortune of being visited by the Prime Minister three times in the course of three years, besides a very large number of other visitors from India and abroad. The people in that project never presented a lone flower even to the Prime Minister. I am sure the Prime Minister valued the silent honour the people did him through their sweating arms and glowing eyes. If band parties were there, they came in their due place, not while receiving a visitor but while the school boys marched in step to the beat of the drum and the tune of the bugle. I appreciate the warm cordiality of our people and I am anxious to honour it by preventing its cheap use. I have no doubt that you will also feel the same way.

[MAY 14, 1954]

We must win the hearts of our village women. There is no better way than to begin with their children. As things stand today, we have about seven crore children of school-going age, of whom about three crores are in schools. These, together with the school teachers, constitute a salvation army bigger than

any the world has ever seen. It was the active work of a segment of this army that contributed so much to our independence from British rule. In the bigger battle of today we should be able to enlist this army as a whole. If the hearts of the children can be won, the hearts of the mothers and, of course, also of the fathers will inevitably follow.

Children, as you know, have no vested interests of their own. They are like flowers, ever anxious to give a smile. They do sneer but in a playful way. They can be harnessed to the task. Once the upsurge has been created in the hearts of the slumbering villages, women leaders will come out. Believe me, they will come out sooner than men. I have seen this happening already in certain limited areas. The pent-up energy that is aching for a creative outlet will amaze us all.

Strengthening the Staff

I had the good fortune of participating in a Collectors' conference in Bombay a short while ago. I have also met many Collectors in the course of my continuous travel. Generally they are excellent people, aching as they are to find expression and play their role in the building up of this land. One thing, however, emerges invariably from my discussions, that the Collector today with all the visitations upon him is the hardest worked individual of all executives of Government. If he is to play the role we expect of him, his hands must be strengthened through the provision of additional staff who can take away the routine load of administration. Now that the Planning Commission has already addressed the State Governments regarding the Second Five Year Plan and the necessity of drawing it up from the bottom, districts upward, there is a definite case for providing some relief to the Collector.

The time has come for the Development Commissioner in the State to have attached to him officers belonging to, and nominated by, every associated development department in the State. Each of these officers will be something in the nature of a Joint Director of Extension in his field. It may be that in

certain cases the heads of departments themselves can play this role, whereas in certain others the men next to them may play this role more effectively. This is a matter which requires immediate attention. The fact that our programme hereafter is intended to be implemented through the departments, Development Commissioners acting only as co-ordinators, makes it all the more necessary that a special officer from every Department be designated to hold the responsibility for the respective field within the orbit of the C.D. Programme. Thus alone can we bring the emphasis and intensification we have long been looking for.

Reports and Returns Vs. *Work*

From my visits in the field I have an impression that our reports and returns are imposing too serious a strain on the field staff. We have to do some solid thinking over this matter. Reports and forms are intended to serve as a barometer of our accomplishment and shortfall in the essentials of our activities. Superfluous items and duplication of forms are not merely a sheer waste but a positive distraction from work. We must review the items and forms, so that a few typical items from the level of Gram Sevaks could, when summed up and correlated, be enough to provide the master chart for all administrative levels beginning with the Block Development Officer's office up to the Administrator's. I need your help in this matter and would like to thrash it out at the forthcoming Conference.

[JUNE 16, 1954]

After the Development Commissioners' Conference at Ooty I found that one or two persons were dissatisfied with their own work as compared to the work in some other States. While I know that "divine discontent" is the prime source of power, I feel that unhappiness on this account has no justification. I will elucidate myself by a simple example. Last night I was sleeping in the open, alone. The sky was overcast with heavy clouds. A dust-storm started blowing. I could see that it was pushing the clouds away and there would be no rains and, therefore, the

heat wave would continue. Yet, it occurred to me immediately that the clouds could not disappear into nowhere. They must condense and pour down in some area. Strangely enough, in half an hour or so, cold wind began to blow from somewhere which must have received the shower. I had the benefit of the good fortune of my neighbour. Incidentally the rain did come in the end, towards the early hours of the morning.

The lesson that I draw from this is that India is an integral whole and even if some States have done better than others, the relatively backward are bound to receive the effect of the relatively forward. In fact, I already see a visible movement forward in the areas which have so far remained backward. In the end it should all level up, so that the community of India can live as a whole, all States and all groups receiving nourishment from the hands of the common Mother.

Appleby Report

You are perhaps aware that Dean Appleby* was here in India again at the invitation of the Indian Government. He left a few weeks ago. I saw him on the eve of his departure and had a long discussion on his present reaction to the Community Projects and National Extension Service programme in India, against the background of his earlier observations on the subject which formed part of the now famous Appleby Report. He was good enough to leave a brief note in confirmation of his discussion with me.

Dean Appleby has paid us a very high tribute indeed in contradicting his own earlier observations and applauding the phenomenal growth he has already seen in our movement. "Most of what I said in my Report of a year ago about Community Projects is now wholly irrelevant. The essential difficulties in the Community Projects have been overcome, and the general success of the programme speaks for itself. It has been expanded more rapidly than had been expected, and is already, much ahead of schedule, in course of translation into a national exten-

*American expert on public administration.

sion programme. . . .The extension programme, holding out the possibility of enlisting greatly extended efforts on the part of 80 per cent of the people of India, is peculiarly hopeful and important, and at the same time peculiarly exacting of the highest administrative abilities and arrangements. It should have corresponding attention." This, coming from a man of Dean Appleby's reputation, is a terrifying compliment. My anxiety, and I know it will be yours also, is how we can continue to be worthy of the compliments we have received.

[JULY 15, 1954]

Reports come to us from time to time indicating that in certain areas work is being done more through the regulatory influence of the Collector and other Revenue Officers than through the patient method of extension. This is quite likely to happen, and can only be avoided through continued vigilance.

The devil's temptation is always there to follow the short route in the matter of physical accomplishment. You should keep a careful vigil against this temptation.

Project Maps

I have been impressed by the maps of project areas which I have seen in quite a number of projects that I have visited during recent months. A map of the Block indicating existing facilities and those that are planned to be established under the programme, helps as no other medium to keep the attention of project staff riveted to the targets as also to an overall picture of the block which normally gets lost in the rush of isolated efforts.

A map such as this can also become a significant centre of attraction and education for village folk, who can see the programme in action on a front wider than their own village.

As a logical corollary you will find that this system is bound to travel down the line, up to the village where the village Panchayat would like to have a map in the Panchayat Ghar, indicating the same features as are included in the Block map. I would strongly commend this for your consideration.

An 'American Programme'?

I find that even now there is a feeling in many areas, not merely amongst villagers but even our staff, that the Community Projects and the National Extension Service are an American programme, if not wholly at least preponderantly financed by the U.S. Government. This has to be corrected.

The total financial aid from the U.S. Technical Co-operation Mission ranges from 6 per cent to 8 per cent. Even this we are finding it difficult to absorb, because of the conditions attached to the purchase of stores and equipment.

Village Industries

I know your difficulties regarding village industries. I also feel guilty that I have so far been able to contribute mighty little in this direction. However, it looks as though we shall soon be able to make a serious beginning. I am working in close touch with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to expedite the preliminary arrangements. It is a happy augury that the All-India Khadi and Village Industries Board* have at last agreed to work hand in hand with us. Let us not be found wanting. They can help, and are eager to do their part. We shall do whatever we can, from this end.

In this connection, I would like to refer to the appointment of Joint Directors of Industries (Extension) and two Technical Experts from the funds allocated under Cottage Industries in the Community Projects Budget. It is essential that these functionaries be put in position before we can even begin a move forward. For the post of Joint Director, what I believe you require is a man with administrative ability and general acquaintance with problems of small-scale industries, technical knowledge not being essential. We are thinking of organising a course of orientation for this officer in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and other agencies working in the field.

---

*Now the Khadi and Village Industries Commission.

Social Education Organisers

I have a feeling that it may not be desirable for us to insist on a B.A. degree for women Social Education Organisers. She may be a good Intermediate. But her training should include, besides the five months' normal course, an additional course of supplementary instruction in home economics, village crafts and child welfare.

Social Education does not work as a mere literacy programme even for men, much less will it for women. Our women are a potential source of power which can do wonders once aroused. The most desirable nucleus for the women's community centre, I find, is a craft centre where they can learn embroidery, sewing, spinning, weaving, and the making of baskets, *niwar,* condiments, confectionaries, etc. Child welfare work and recreational programmes, including bhajan, dance and music, will also attract them. Women can attend these centres for about three hours a day. It is therefore not necessary to have a full-time functionary in charge of these community centres. You may take up a woman school teacher or a progressive woman leader of the village, give her some training and put her incharge of this centre on an honorarium. This can be on the pattern which we have recommended for village school teachers in charge of Social Education for men, namely Rs. 15 to Rs. 20 a month. I have seen it work well.

Role of the Development Commissioner

By and large I find that the Heads of Departments in the States are eager to play their part. But the temptation is very great to do the job oneself when one is rushed for time; one feels that one can ill afford the time for teaching or inspiring the other fellow. Unfortunately we cannot escape the responsibility for teaching and energising the other man. If the State as a whole is to be covered, no one man or Department can ever be big enough for the giant task. Therefore, the sooner we make the effort for teaching the other man to come into the picture, the better it is for all concerned and certainly for the programme.

The function of the Development Commissioner, therefore, is that of the traditional Indian *guru*. The *guru* and his *chelas* have always constituted a single brotherhood with no distinction in rank, except in wisdom and in the source of inner strength. I know that the role is tough, but nothing less is expected of the Development Commissioner.

You will have noted from the Press the efforts we are making on behalf of the Community Projects Administration to bring about full co-ordination of our work with that of the Central Ministries. You will be glad to know that the Prime Minister has given us a helping hand. He has asked the Central Ministries, through a recent circular, to work for the same consummation. He has also written specially to the Chief Ministers. This should give you the sanction you require. The programme is now a single-line movement encompassing the will and resources of the Government as a whole.

You will also have noted the emphasis the Prime Minister has been laying on this programme and its revolutionary significance in his addresses to urban as well as rural audiences. I wonder if you are aware that in three years we are covering about double the population touched by the U.S. Extension Service, which was built up over a period of 40 years. Extension in America touched only agriculture and a few other minor items associated with it, whereas our movement has grown into a synthesis of all the values we prize in our culture.

[AUGUST 14, 1954]

I am writing to you on the eve of Independence Day. Being more fortunately placed than many others so far as the perspective of the country as a whole is concerned, I find that our movement has covered an enormous distance. And in this great movement I see the embryo of a colossus taking shape.

Believe me, never in history has this country stood so high; never has it moved so sure of itself. We have a mighty future beckoning to us. If there is one thing I am certain of on this

fateful day, it is that the little seed we sowed, and which is sprouting slowly but steadily, is destined for a great future. It is natural for us to be overwhelmed by our own smallness in the context of the mighty events which are shaking the country. Yet, when we take the plunge and let ourselves glide with the gushing current, lo, we are as strong as the current itself! It seems as if life with its primordial force is pushing us from behind. Let us then look ahead and swim as fast as we can, making sure that our movements are with the current.

Administrative Intelligence

With the programme spreading out all over the country, I am finding it impossible to maintain physical contact with all areas. Yet, I know it is futile to think of doing justice to this programme unless I have the feel of the movement in the beat of my own pulse. Hence the need for an Administrative Intelligence Section in the CPA. Based on the data we now receive from you, we hope to establish a quarter-to-quarter index on the progress of the movement in all the States. The technique is being studied with all the resources available in Delhi today, indigenous as well as foreign. I have every reason to believe that we shall work out a final pattern soon.

What applies to the CPA at the Centre will apply equally on the State front. It is no longer possible for the Development Commissioner or his Deputy to keep in touch with the movement on all spots through personal contacts. In fact, it would be a negation of all principles of administration even to attempt it. Therefore, it seems time that you begin setting up an Administrative Intelligence Section based on the same statistical reports which you send to us. The smooth working of the system will demand a combination of sound administrative judgment with statistical knowledge. The appointment of a statistician will, therefore, appear to be the first step. I shall be glad to arrange for a month's special training to the statisticians in the working of the system, once we get our own machine moving on correct lines.

[SEPTEMBER 14, 1954]

We have begun at last to step into the wider horizon. The Minister in charge of the Mass Education Programme in Burma (the equivalent of our programme in India), together with the Chief Executive Officer and other associates, arrived here last week for a study of the Community Development Programme in India. A South East Asian delegation, comprising representatives from Burma, Ceylon, Indonesia and the Philippines, arrived two days ago. They are proceeding on their field trip tomorrow and will spend about a month studying the various aspects of our programme in different parts of the country. The delegation includes officials of a high calibre, who are intelligent as well as knowledgeable. Our discussions with them, I may assure you, did not constitute a one-way traffic. The visitors had a lot to tell us of their experiences in their own programme at home. Yet it was clear that our programme was unique, in the sense that in size, tempo and character it hardly had a precedent.

Orientation for Specialists

Experience of the working of the programme confirms that subject-matter specialists at the Block Headquarters, or Extension Officers as you may call them, need a two to three months' orientation in the programme. This is partly to acquaint them with the multipurpose yet integrated character of the programme, and partly to imbue them with the sense of urgency and action-mindedness which is called for by the present dynamic situation. This orientation programme for Block Level Specialists is especially indicated because of the rapid expansion of the programme which has already begun to encompass the functionaries of almost all the departments, not a few of whom would require radical transformation in outlook before they can fit into the context of our assignment. A number of States who have tried this orientation for their Block Level Specialists are thoroughly satisfied with the results. I would therefore plead with you for giving this a trial, if you have not done so already. The Ministry

of Agriculture is finalising a scheme according to which there will be 17 special wings attached to our Extension Training Centres so as to enable the States to undertake this training. I shall be grateful if you will kindly initiate preliminary action pending formal sanction from the Ministry of Agriculture.

Intra-State Seminars

Intra-State seminars yield rich dividends. It would be of considerable help to the CPA if you can let us have a brief report on the experiences gained and difficulties encountered during the seminars, so that we may try at our end to pool the experience of each State for transmission back to all. I would also be happy personally to try to participate in these seminars if you can give me notice sufficiently in advance.

You will have heard regarding the inter-State seminars, which will begin with one at Mysore in the month of October. We are very eager this year to complete the round of seminars by the end of March or latest by the beginning of April. The present series of inter-State seminars include the Collectors of Districts as the main participants. I do hope you will try to get as many Collectors to attend the seminars as you possibly can. There is no better way of acquainting them with the spirit of the programme.

[OCTOBER 14, 1954]

The programme under the Community Projects initiated on October 2, 1952, has now crossed the two-year milepost. The data indicate that there has been improvement in the expenditure as also physical accomplishment in these projects, although a lot more remains to be done if the norm is to be reached even on the basis of a four-year operation. Experience indicates that with minor exceptions the bulk of the 1952 projects will succeed in accomplishing the expenditure of the complete budget provision, in certain cases even appreciably before the expiry of the four-year period, provided the tempo of effort is not allowed to slacken and adequate delegation of powers

continues flowing down the line. So far so good. I am sorry, however, that I cannot say this in respect of the 1953-54 Blocks. Here the expenditure continues to strike an abnormally low level compared even to the 1952 Blocks during like periods.

I am beginning to find it embarrassing to continue on the defensive over this issue. No doubt, you feel the same way and will take the necessary steps to instil some fire into the programme.

"First Aid" Man

As I see it, the Gram Sevak is growing to be the "G.P." or the "First Aid" man, with the polyclinic functioning at the Block Headquarters where specialists of all kinds operate under the co-ordinating guidance of the Medical Superintendent, who is our Block Development Officer. To look at the functions of the Gram Sevak this way has some advantage. It facilitates the interpretation of the Gram Sevak in the eyes of all for what exactly he is or should be. If you like, you may give currency to the concept. It will clear the air which not unoften gets charged unduly because of controversies in the interpretation of functions between members of our staff.

Rural Electrification

Electricity, the invisible power from the heavens, is the herald of the new age in the villages. Wherever there is electricity, the outlook of the village in the matter of roads, drains, latrines, housing, etc., undergoes a transformation without much pressure from without. It is an accepted policy of the Government that there will be progressive electrification of rural areas. Several of our projects have already availed of money, unutilisable for irrigation, to provide electricity to the villages. I would strongly commend this. The provision you already have under the overall Projects Budget for the State should be enough for a beginning. If more money is needed, you may let me know so that I may take up the case of rural electrification as an all-India issue in Community Projects for consideration by the Planning Commission. This is a vital cause worth championing.

[NOVEMBER 17, 1954]

We know that human beings will never be all alike or equal. Inequalities will remain, to provide a continuing incentive to progress. This means we have to produce quality, and its extension in space. In practice this will imply the discovery of the most progressive group of people in a block, and then getting them to produce the best results so that the particular village could act as the equivalent of the demonstration farm we use in the field of agriculture. I know that what I have stated is the first elementary principle in extension. I mention it all the same because I find that it is oftentimes lost sight of.

Of course we do not desire, till we can find employment for all our people, to introduce highly mechanised equipment such as tractors, bull-dozers, scrapers, etc., except for special operations such as reclamation of land. Yet I find that the demonstration of the work of heavy equipment in villages has tremendous potentialities for the revitalisation of the now static life in rural areas. I was amazed, for instance, at the spirit of curious wonder I saw in the eyes of the men, women and children who were watching a bull-dozer and a scraper reconditioning a derelict tank in a Punjab village. In the course of a single day these machines produced almost as much work as the villagers have been used to doing in a year. The shock of the impact, I find, is something terrific. If intelligently followed up, it can help materially in the social education of the static mind.

Showing by Doing

Our politicians, college professors, school teachers and our parents, all have been tireless in gospelling on the clean life and the good life. But sermonising has lost all sanctity. "Showing by doing" is what matters, or else we should all have been God's own men and women by now, what with the Upanishads and what with the text-books and sermons on the platform.

Our extension man should extend by doing what he preaches, be it initiative, industry, integrity, fellow-feeling, humility or any

of the other virtues we extol. "Example is better than precept" is an old adage which we will do well to repeat to ourselves.

Consolidation of Holdings

Punjab and PEPSU have taken up consolidation of holdings on a large scale. Wherever consolidation has taken place, the farmers are happy; so are the whole communities. The farmers concerned are happy because they can take better care of their land, now in one holding. The communities are happy because consolidation has meant that well-demarcated areas are set apart at appropriate sites for community works such as roads, schools, Panchayat Ghars, compost pits, fuel forests, playgrounds, etc.

Consolidation of holdings as an answer to the problem of fragmentation is an approved programme for the country as a whole. Could we not make a beginning with it in the CD areas in every State ?

The Gram Sevak

While in the initial stages of our work any overture from the side of Government was a net addition to village amenities, the time is approaching fast when our stock of generalities will get dry, calling for more specific and detailed knowledge if the extension movement is not to suffer a standstill. While I know that the permanent answer will eventually lie in the establishment of Research and Extension Centres at all levels, it occurs to me that we shall stand in progressively greater need of more qualified personnel as Gram Sevaks.

I find from my experience in the field that Gram Sevaks with higher qualifications, especially in the field of agriculture, are proving much more effective, by and large, than people with the standard qualifications. We have already recommended advance increments for Gram Sevaks with higher qualifications. Gram Sevaks selected out of ex-Servicemen with experience in agriculture are generally proving more effective than the freshers.

[DECEMBER 30, 1954]

I find that experienced singers can do much more to convey our ideas to the unsophisticated village people through native songs and *bhajans* especially composed for the programme, than our project staff can through chalk and black-board instruction or lectures and demonstrations. I do not mean to deprecate the latter but rather to emphasise the need for utilising indigenous techniques. I have seen them being used most effectively in Uttar Pradesh and the Punjab; I believe it is also being tried in Bihar and Orissa, and maybe in other States also. I commend this to all States. We may employ a set of artists of this type, for a district or a group of districts, out of the funds for Social Education. The technique is our own and is rooted in our blood. It cannot fail, if the selection of the artists is made carefully.

Gram Sevikas

The problem of women in rural areas still presents a formidable hurdle. It will be quite some time before conditions will be ripe to make it possible for educated women to work in rural areas with understanding and mental ease. Women Social Education Organisers are still not available in sufficient number. I do not expect any significant change in the position in the near future. But the women's programme cannot wait till our educated women are able to proceed to the villages. We have to do the best in the existing situation. My suggestion, therefore, is that where Women Social Education Organisers are not forthcoming, we may make a beginning with one or two Gram Sevikas more or less of the type represented by the Kasturba Trust workers. These Gram Sevikas may make a beginning with Women's Centres in a limited number of villages, based on child welfare, home crafts such as embroidery, spinning, weaving, tailoring, and *bhajans* and *kirtans*. Women must be brought out in the open so that they can have a chance to work together as a community. I do not see how we can make even a beginning with our programme of child welfare, dietetics, village sanitation and hygiene unless we draw women into the movement.

Wherever I go I find an awakening among village women. A woman who has been able to earn even an anna, with her own labour, is a transformed human being. There will always be one or two progressive women in a village. They may not be progressive from the urban point of view but, relatively speaking, they will be forward enough for our purpose to be the nucleus of the programme for the rest of the village women. This will happen if Gram Sevikas can be brought into the picture.

Visitors and Villagers

Not infrequently, villagers are presented to visitors by Government staff working in the projects. This, I feel, is utterly wrong. Villages belong to the village people. If we have been able to arouse the village, the first sign of it should be a new village leadership. The village leaders should receive the visitors, the Government staff remaining as far as possible in the background.

Visitors should not be a burden on the village community. What is worse, I find that not infrequently visitors to a village are entertained by village leaders representing only the well-to-do section of the community. This practice, I fear, is not in the interest of the programme, as it is bound to leave the poorer section of the community with a feeling of inferiority. The village as a whole must provide entertainment to the visitor, to the extent that such entertainment is considered necessary. The Panchayat leader may act as the host, but he should do so on behalf, and at the expense, of the whole community.

Bridging the Gulf

More than fifteen days in a month I spend in the villages. I meet tens of thousands of big-hearted village people who, to my mind, represent the finest human material we could ever find anywhere. But, alas, there is a big gulf yet that separates the conditions of living in the villages from those that obtain in the capital here or in the States. These capitals with all the amenities that many of us enjoy are borne primarily on the shoulders

of the millions who slog in the countryside. We do not wish to pull standards down. Yet, if the gulf that separates the tower from the dwarf is not bridged rapidly enough for the context in which we live, there will be trouble ahead which no power can resist, much less avoid.

We are on a long pilgrimage. Though the route already covered is not insignificant, the route yet ahead looks frightening in length. But others promise to join us soon to share our burden. What can I wish you on the eve of the New Year but that your muscles and mind will continue to forge ahead, with the heart throbbing with the excitement of this adventure?

[FEBRUARY 9, 1955]

There is one thing of which I am certain. The age of "Dying for the Motherland" is over. Instead, the age is on in which one has to "Live for the Motherland" so that she can grow fuller and richer. The Community Projects Programme does mean fuller life as much for the individual as for the community as a whole. This, however, cannot be brought about if the agency working for the attainment of this objective itself forgets the art of living. I have been prompted to write this to you as I discovered unhappily that some of us are working on the programme far too indiscreetly, so far as our personal health is concerned.

Working in close touch as I do with the Prime Minister and seeing the crowded hours of work he has been putting in without respite for years now, I come to the inevitable conclusion that it is not work that breaks a person down. It is worry that does. Dedication to an assignment is good. But attachment is fatal. Dedication has an element of innate detachment which protects the dedicated from all after-effects of the travail involved. Attachment is something that invisibly corrodes the attached within. The distinction is fundamental. The practice of detachment is hard, for it involves the art of self-realisation. Apart from this spiritual exercise, I should commend once again an enforced vacation from one's work, carefully planned out for every single

worker connected with our programme. Sometimes eleven hours prove to be much more effective than twelve hours. Hence my plea for a year with eleven months of work as against twelve.

Mobilising Women

By now I am fully convinced that it is not going to be easy for us to procure the requisite number of women Social Education Organisers, howsoever we may relax our exacting specifications. Yet, wherever I go, I find women staring at us from the distance in increasing numbers. Mute and dumb, they long to make their contribution to the reconstruction of life. Their silent work, whether in the fields, at the well, in the kitchen or in the dung heap, bears living testimony to the fact that we owe our culture, whatever remains, to women. Could we leave them behind and still expect to go ahead through the efforts of a handful of men, with the hunter's instinct still so fiercely alive in us ?

I have discussed this matter at considerable length with many of my friends in the field. I find that the only course open to us is to make a beginning with the women school teachers of the right outlook wherever we can find them, or appoint them newly to take charge of the girl students in the middle or even in the primary school. These teachers can initiate the movement among the school girls, acting the pioneers in their own homes with their mothers and sisters and then with their neighbours. The idea is being worked out in greater details in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, and you will hear from us again soon. There are schools and women teachers of the kind I have just described, already in action in our own programme. Wherever tried, the result has been amazing. It can be still more effective if we can give these women teachers a short course in the multi-purpose women's programme.

The Medium of the 'Mela'

India is a country of *melas*, the Kumbh Mela being supreme among them. Our people are not prepared to learn the lessons of extension singly. We must therefore use the natural forms

which are part of our tradition. *Melas* have been tried in our programme with success. The job today is to organise them on scientific lines, incorporating not merely the recreational programme but the entire programme covered under the Community Projects. I have seen the countryside fired with enthusiasm wherever this medium is being tried. You cannot find a better medium for the spread of social education.

I know that *melas* cannot be complete without the inevitable distribution of prizes for performances of exceptional character in various fields. My suggestion is that the prizes may be offered not in cash but in kind, in the form of daily necessities which are now beyond the resources of the village families but which can be manufactured locally by artisans and craftsmen. If we can tie these two together we shall with one stroke promote healthy competition in all fields by individuals, groups and communities, and at the same time provide protection and a ready market, howsoever limited it may be, for the local artisans. We want the village artisans and craftsmen to become better producers to contribute to the fuller life of the community and in turn, to absorb the increased purchasing power resulting from the increased agricultural production.

Government Servants' New Role

Government servants of today, I find, fall prey from time to time to a sense of frustration. This springs from the feeling that even when they virtually kill themselves with work, to the neglect of personal life or comfort, they receive no appreciation. They tend at times to feel that if our political leaders claim to have brought freedom to the Motherland and to hold the monopoly of her reconstruction, they had better do all the worrying and the hard work.

Being rather fortunately placed, inasmuch as I have had an opportunity to function with all from the highest in the Government down to the obscure villager, I can understand the situation with much greater sympathy than many others. The only answer I have to a situation like this is that the Government

servant of today, apart from being the disciplined member of a corps of workers maintained by the public, is also the citizen of free India. He or she is also the father or mother of the citizen of tomorrow, for whom all of us are engaged today in building a new mansion. This country is not the private preserve of any individual or group. Our political leaders have done more than their due share in freeing the Motherland from the shackles of foreign rule. The bulk of them, in spite of a generation and more of jail life and cudgel beating, are still engaged in burning midnight oil and themselves in the process. It is a sad commentary on the younger generation, which should by now have taken up the major share of the burden upon itself.

Government servants of today, representing the cream of the nation's human resources, have been entrusted with the glorious task of laying the scaffolding for the mansion of New India. And this the Government servant is asked to do with no sacrifice in income or status. All that is demanded is that more than Sixteen Annas be given for the Rupee received, so that the balance can go to building up the country. Surely Government servants, as citizens of free India, can ignore the pin-pricks on the wayside.

[MARCH 9, 1955]

The Prime Minister said in his recent address to the Indian Chamber of Commerce that the country was afire with a sense of adventure and progressive fulfilment. It was due primarily to three factors: (i) the food position; (ii) foreign relations; and (iii) the impact on the countryside of the Community Development Programme.

He explained that there was nothing spectacular about the Community Development Programme. In fact, an organic development and an element of the spectacular are concepts which are mutually exclusive. The Prime Minister added that the programme was working a silent revolution, because it was bringing a qualitative change in the masses of our people.

I have been touring our projects without respite. So have many of you. I do not wish to be complacent, but I do feel that by and large it has been a good job done so far. Even the programme of the 1953-54 series is beginning to look up at last. I offer to you and myself congratulations on the journey till now. I am also beginning to wonder if we are not approaching a stage, especially in regard to the 1952-53 projects, where the "Government projects with people's participation" should begin to change now into "People's projects with Government participation." What is after all the aim of the Community Development Programme? In essence, as I see it, it is a programme to carry conviction to ourselves and to the large masses of our people in the countryside, that they are today the rulers of India and not the ruled as they have been for centuries. It is time they begin to take possession of the estates of which they are the owners, and make use of the Government agency for the limited finance and the technical and administrative assistance that the agency is capable of offering.

The new awareness will begin to be there, if the transformation is really taking place. If it is, the compost pits, fertilisers, roads, community centres and the host of other physical items of development will be taken care of as a spontaneous routine. Whereas if this qualitative change is not taking place, we shall have achieved nothing more than what contractors, even imported from abroad, could have done.

Let us then look at the programme with a little sense of detachment and find out for our own satisfaction to what extent we are travelling in the right direction, as against the mad rush for statistics. I maintain, and I do so without any reservation whatsoever, that the qualitative transformation if it is taking place at all will take care of the material changes needed; but not *vice versa*. Perhaps it is here that the fundamental difference lies between the character of our programme and that of the programme in totalitarian countries.

[APRIL 17, 1955]

I wrote to you last month that the stage will appear to have arrived where we should begin to think of ways and means by which we can bring about a smooth transformation of the present "Government projects with people's participation" into "People's projects with Government participation". You will readily agree that unless this is achieved we shall have done very little to deserve the credit which is being showered on us liberally at home and abroad. The Prime Minister has been equally concerned over the matter and is eager to bring about this consummation. There are a number of well-planned steps that will have to be taken if the transformation is to be achieved. The most important one will appear to be a delegation of powers to village bodies, even at the risk of some portion of the money being not as well spent as we feel it could be under Government auspices.

I discussed this matter with the Finance Minister. He feels that this risk should be taken and he asked me to find out from you during the forthcoming Development Commissioners' Conference as to the fields in which delegation of these powers could be made to village bodies, on the basis of your experience during the past two years and a half. I would request you to do some thinking on this matter, so that we may arrive at some decisions when we meet at Simla.

One of the most effective means by which we can bring about the intelligent participation of village leaders, and village people in general, is through the organisation of Shibirs and Training Camps extending from three to six weeks for village leaders as also village women, and through the organisation of village leaders' seminars from three days to one week, combined with Kisan Melas running alongside. All these activities are going on in different States, with results which have exceeded our expectations. All these go to confirm the innate vitality and the native wisdom of our simple folk in the village. While a good deal has been done, we have so far acted in this field more or less in an *ad hoc* fashion. The time has arrived to institutionalise

the system. The Ford Foundation have been good enough to promise adequate financial help for the sponsoring of a programme of in-service training for officials as well as non-officials and for inter-State visits by project staff, the village people and their leaders. I shall have more concrete proposals ready for discussion with you when we meet at Simla. I shall be grateful if you will meantime kindly do some preliminary thinking on this.

Training of Personnel

Not to speak of the Second Five Year Plan, even our present programme demands the production of five to six thousand Village Level Workers a year. We had 34 Extension Training Centres, a good many of which were double-shift units. We have added eight more Centres recently. Twenty-one new Centres are in the process of being set up. Yet I find that the capacity of these Centres is not being fully availed of. In fact, taking the picture of India as a whole, we seem to be hardly utilising 70 per cent of the existing capacity. The same holds good for the Social Education Organisers and Block Development Officers' Training Centres where, in spite of the provision for full enrolment, the State Governments for some reason or the other do not find themselves able to take full advantage of the quota allotted to them. Our need for trained workers is desperate. We should make full use of the facilities we have established.

Enlivening Village Life

You know how drab and dull life is in our villages today. With the setting of the sun many a village appears totally dead, except for the occasional howls of jackals and the barking of stray dogs. Community Centres certainly go some way in breaking the monotony. I find that the use of petromax lamps makes all the difference between a dingy dark corner and a place of cheer which attracts and invites. The petromax lamp is being introduced in a good number of Community Centres.

Take again the smokeless Magan Chula. I have seen wonderful changes following in the home, and especially in the kitchen,

as a result of this one simple innovation. It removes the chronic eye trouble of our village people and the tears of our sisters in the kitchen. I cannot help making almost a fetish of this one item. You have now the full specifications of the Magan Chula in the Housing Manual.

In Picturesque NEFA

I was in the North East Frontier Agency and in other areas of Assam during the middle of last month. It is really remarkable how people hailing from different parts of India, and especially Overseers and Engineers from remote Travancore-Cochin and Madras, are functioning as a team with a crusader's zeal in the implementation of this common programme in the midst of a people who are a world all their own.

This programme of ours, believe me friends, is really working a revolution. The turbulent Nagas boycotted the programme in the Naga Hills for a full year to start with. They are now working the programme with full fervour.

Creative Freedom

The greatest danger that faces this programme is the risk of stagnation setting in. It holds good as much in the training centre as in the field. Man is at his best when he is a creator. A creator is a free man subject only to the limitations imposed by his own enlightened conscience. If we accept this, delegation of financial and other powers will have to travel all along the line right up to the lowest functionary. It will also have to travel the same way at the non-official level. Man is at his best when free to err. To run the risk of committing an error and accounting for it, is the prerogative of a free man. Are we sure that we are making a deliberate effort to promote this creative freedom?

As Others See Us

A number of Russian friends visited the Nilokheri Training Centre as also the project around. They have also visited several

other areas in different States. Their instinctive reaction to which they gave free expression was: "This is precisely what had happened in the countryside after we had our revolution, with the difference that you are doing the same thing in a different way." We could not have had a higher compliment; I thought you would be interested in how others look at us. You know that a number of delegations from the Near and Far Eastern countries have been visiting us for a study of our programme. We have already received demands for the training of workers from neighbouring countries, and are sending our representatives to participate in seminars abroad.

[MAY 31, 1955]

As I look at the Conference at Simla in retrospect, I feel amazed at the maturity that has come over this organisation throughout, in the short span of two years and a half. It only goes to prove that lessons learnt from a job done with honesty of purpose are infinitely more significant than theories learnt from books or handed down by scholars within closed walls. Yet, I am somewhat worried about the singular lack of heat and controversy throughout the Conference. I am worried because learning is a continuous process, and learning if it is worth the name should mean realisation individual to each one. Although the base may be common, experience should vary in details—particularly so from region to region.

The question that arises is whether, with progressive maturity, we are also not aging physically. There is danger in conformity. Conformity to fundamentals is, of course, basic to any organised programme such as ours. But there are extremes which one has to steer clear of.

I was most agreeably surprised to see the excited publicity over my rather casual offer during the Conference to act as a Gram Sevak for a short period in some part of India. Of course, I was serious about it and will do so definitely before I meet you for the next Conference. But my surprise is over the character

of the reaction this casual offer has aroused in the Press, the people and in our workers in particular.

This indicates, if I am correct in my interpretation of the situation, that there is a universal desire to see the end of those age-long walls of caste and privilege which we built into the fabric of our static society. I could hardly imagine that the desire to see the artificial walls pulled down, so as to bring all to a common level, was so universal. For obvious reasons, I would be most foolish to ask you to leave your work, heavy as it should be already, and indulge in a "de-casteing" campaign. What you may do, however, is to make a deliberate effort to expand the brotherhood campaign which we have launched already through our regional and intra-State seminars.

Ramakrishna Mission

You know the activities of the Ramakrishna Mission and the undiluted missionary spirit that still continues to dominate these activities. We have, for the past three years, been making efforts to associate this organisation with our programme. Our efforts appear to have begun to succeed at last. The Mission has agreed to run a Social Education Organisers' Training Centre for our programme adjoining the Belur Math. They are also prepared to recompile the sayings, ancedotes and stories of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda in a form that can be supplied to all our workers, village libraries, community centres, etc. I have not known a mission in India or abroad which is guided by a more dynamic spirit of the universal brotherhood of man, and the divinity of all life.

The Test of Success

All of us emphasised at Simla the need for statutory people's organs, at the level of the village in particular. As I told you, I have never been convinced more than I am today that the success or failure of our programme eventually will be judged only by one factor—the extent to which we have been able to transform the "Government programme with people's participa-

tion" into a "People's programme with Government participation". The key to this change-over lies in the creation of statutory village bodies which can be trained to take over the initiative from the Government before the expiry of the programme.

[JUNE 9, 1955]

By the time this reaches you, I shall be several thousand miles away from the shores of India, talking on the Community Development Programme in Indonesia. I leave tomorrow morning, and shall be back on the 9th of August. I have taken this assignment on behalf of the United Nations.

The movement in India has already ceased to be a mere Indian programme. It will perforce have to grow to be a part of a global mission to which we, as a nation, would be expected to contribute our quota. We, who are too near to the event, apparently are not yet in a position to assess the movement in its overall potentiality. Maybe, the world is on its way to the discovery of a new root for democracy. I am saying all this because it will help ease at least partially the enormous strain to which the whole organisation has been subject, during the past three years, if we can look at ourselves as part of a wider movement.

We have just summed up the activities over India as a whole for the quarter ending March 31, 1955. The cyclostyled material will reach you shortly. You will feel heartened, as I do abundantly on the eve of my journey abroad, that we have, by and large done a thorough job of which we can all be proud.

[JULY 25, 1955]

I send these lines to you from Djakarta, the capital of Indonesia. It is a city of more than two million people. The exact population is not known, as there has been no census in the country since 1930. Djakarta is more or less an international settlement, with a population representing all countries of the world. The city was presumably designed by the Dutch ex-rulers to be a replica of Amsterdam. It has many handsome features

and so also many others to the contrary, and is like any other international city in the world.

You can readily see that Djakarta is not quite Indonesia. I had all the same to make an effort to see Indonesia from high up, through the dispersed offices of the multitude of Ministries and Departments. It was an exhausting job, as there are very few people here who understand English, and it is a painful experience, to say the least, to have to conduct vital conversation through an interpreter. Somehow, I completed the series of discussions at breakneck speed in the course of about a fortnight. I had then to see the country where it really belongs.

The next step, therefore, was a hurricane tour along the length and breadth of this largest island-chain in the world involving long flights by air in the most freakish of weather. The programme is over by now. In 22 days, I have travelled a little over 8,000 kilometers by air, more than 4,000 kilometers by road of all standards and specifications and several hundred kilometers by rail. I have visited 11 out of the 12 provinces of Indonesia, and discoursed on the Indian programme and exchanged views on the proposed programme in Indonesia with the entire cross-section of people from the Governors of provinces down to the village people.

Indonesia is by far one of the richest countries in the world, inhabited by large masses of simple people more or less like our own. The country has a land area about half that of India, and a population above one-fifth of India's. This, however, does not give the full picture, for the land here is extraordinary in fertility. The country is a veritable fairyland for anyone determined to exert even moderately for a living.

The people of Indonesia are a remarkable race. Despite my extensive travel I have yet to come across two Indonesians flinging harsh words at each other, not to speak of blows. The people will not even talk loudly to each other. I have yet not come across a stranger who would not return a smile for a smile. Since I do not know the language of the people nor have the

time for it, smiles and signs are the only language which I can use for the daily needs of life. And this has never failed.

The Indian programme has made a deep impression on the minds of people here. They already share in common a good deal of the cultural heritage of India, and value India as a land of great thoughts and great people. You can imagine the sense of anxious humility under which I am grappling with my own thoughts. The framework of the programme is ready by now.

In 14 days I shall be back in your midst in India. For 23 years I have not been away from the shores of India. It was necessary, particularly after the grind of the past eight years since our Independence, that I should get out and have a look at her from a distance. I go to the seashore here and touch the water; I know, through the blue surface spread out beyond the seemingly infinite distance, that I am touching the shores of India. I can see Kanya Kumari tapering out of the mainland and meeting the Arabian Sea, the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean, a confluence which has always charmed me. My friends, we live in a great land, with a great mission, in a great New World.

[AUGUST 27, 1955]

I have always held the view that no one can help someone else without helping himself in the process. Therefore, while trying to study conditions in Indonesia and making recommendations for a programme based on our experiences in India, I also had the opportunity of learning a lot from that great country. I shall confine myself here to the enumeration of four cardinal features in the Indonesian people which, I believe, will be an object lesson to us all in India :

(i) There is complete equality between men and women in that country. Women are seen in every field of activity, from agriculture to medicine, and yet they have not lost the elegance and grace of womanhood, which is said to be the first casualty in the exercise of freedom by women. The happy blending that

Indonesia has achieved in this sphere is something to marvel at.

(ii) Co-operation is the rule of life among the masses of her people. "Gotong Royong", which means "mutual help", is an Indonesian heritage.

(iii) There is complete absence of caste or gradation of people in the structure of Indonesian society. It was indeed a remarkable experience for me to see youngsters, who have just entered service as mere office assistants, dashing into the office of the highest Government official without any trace of mental reservation. Indonesia gives almost a slap in the face of our class and level consciousness, within the Government and without.

(iv) The acquisitive instinct is conspicuous by its absence in the masses of the Indonesian people.

You can readily see how far ahead the people of Indonesia are in many of the crucial features which we have been struggling to establish as the objective of our Community Development Programme.

New Obligations

Our programme has been doing undoubted good to the masses of our people, and perhaps even more so to ourselves who are engaged in this endeavour. Our brothers and sisters in countries in the Far and Middle East have also begun to look up to India as a beacon for their own development. I have had, since my return, the visit of a Minister from Burma who seems eager to start a community development programme in that country. A delegation came recently from Thailand, which is also eager to sponsor the programme. The same holds good for Iran. We are also having the Deputy Prime Minister of Egypt, who will study especially the Community Development Programme in India.

The way we can be of help to our neighbours, and also learn most effectively from them, would be to undertake the training of

the key staff for these countries. For obvious reasons, it will not be desirable to run a special training centre for this purpose. We would like instead to distribute trainees from abroad to our various existing institutions, so that there can be widespread participation in this new mission.

If India is playing a not insignificant role as a neutral ground between warring nations, she will also have to serve likewise in the field of development for nations which are groping for a way out of the jig-saw puzzle of the traditional laws of economics.

[SEPTEMBER 25, 1955]

I find from an examination of the expenditure on our projects that expenditure under the head of Project Headquarters and Social Education are tending to overshoot the provision. I shall deal with the Project Headquarters some other time. For the present I wish to confine myself to the item of Social Education.

My study reveals that there is a general tendency to spend funds under Social Education for the construction of panchayat ghars, community centres, expensive children's parks, radio sets, etc. It will need no special effort to realise that even if we spend the entire project funds for these purposes the full needs cannot be met. While Government funds will have justification for being used substantially on subsidies towards drinking-water supplies and essential culverts, etc., in a village, in the field of Social Education the funds should be used literally and purely as catalysts.

These should, for instance, cover promotion of village libraries, establishment and running of information and community centres at Block Headquarters, programme of indoor and outdoor recreation, accessories for adult education and provision for village leaders' training camps and seminars. Financing of buildings with funds from Social Education will appear to be an extravagance and an abuse of this limited provision.

[OCTOBER 28, 1955]

While it is quite clear that district heads of departments will act only to the extent they are inspired by their heads of departments at the State Headquarters, even then it will help a good deal if the Collector as the multi-purpose head of the district administration can act in practice as the district administrator, inspiring the district heads to play their part in this fast-expanding programme.

I feel intrigued at times to discover the belief in some Collectors that they can function effectively only if the heads of departments in the district are placed directly subordinate to them. I have never known or heard of any but purely temporary physical needs being achieved through the agency of slaves. The difference between us in India and the totalitarian regimes lies in the fact that our entire programme of national reconstruction is based on democratic thinking and action. If the Collector is to be the district administrator as against the foreman in a totalitarian regime, there has to be a clear understanding on this point. Collectors by and large are men with pronounced character and capabilities. They will have to depend on inner strength rather than on outer mandates, if this programme of ours is to develop as a people's programme growing in freedom.

No man or woman in this world is totally useless for constructive human endeavour. Even in the lowliest of souls there is a potential creator if only it can be fitted as a square peg in a square hole. Most of our trouble, whether in administration or elsewhere, arises from the struggle to fit the square peg in a round hole.

Public Participation

We continue to be exercised over non-official participation in Project Advisory Committees. We do not know when we are likely to have the response we aim at. It occurs to me that we have arrived at a stage where we should think in terms of increasing the association of representative Panchayat leaders as members of Project Advisory Committees and not confine these Com-

mittees merely to Parliament and Legislative Assembly members. State Governments have full discretion in this matter, and I hope you will begin to exercise it to draw in non-officials from the grassroots.

I am also wondering if heads of all departments at the district level, including the Superintendent of Police, are being made to play their part in these committees. The Superintendent of Police, although he has a regulatory function, should be an equally welcome addition to the ranks. We should try to ensure that law-abiding citizens do shed their fear of the police. Participation of the Superintendent of Police in the Project Advisory Committees proceedings may mark a beginning in that direction.

There are two primary criteria by which we judge the success or otherwise of this programme—physical accomplishment and the identification of the people as the prime movers behind the programme. There is no regular yard-stick for measuring the people's identification with the programme. The heart, however, is a sensitive galvanometer. I am touched virtually to the point of tears when I come across Government staff, from the Collectors to the Village Level Workers, merging in the village crowd in this common endeavour. I feel equally hurt when I see some Government staff doling out benefits to the 'poor' village people, from high up. The latter phenomenon is happily on the decrease. I find invariably that the projects which shine most are those in which the Government staff has lost its separate identity.

[DECEMBER 10, 1955]

You will have read in the Press the lengthy debate on Community Projects which took place in Parliament two days ago. The crux of the controversy has been the ineffectiveness of the Project Advisory Committees. We function in a democracy, under mandates from Parliament and State Legislatures as contrasted with mandates from a totalitarian Viceroy till yesterday. As I have mentioned above, we can ignore non-officials only at our peril. If this movement is to continue, we have to be earnest about vitalising the activities of the Project

Advisory Committees at the Block level and the Panchayats at the village level. These bodies should be considered the primary source of initiative for the implementation of the programme.

On the other hand our non-official friends, who have done a generation or more of fighting with the foreign rulers, interspersed with services to the people in distress wherever possible, have to be transformed from the old concept of "good service" to one of "good politics" in the Welfare State which we are out to build. The government agency is expected to function in the spirit of a missionary institution. The people's leaders have to provide good politics to the people, leaving the Government agency to take care of the service which was their responsibility heretofore.

A Development Commissioner was expressing to me recently his great sense of satisfaction over the fact that the Government functionary has at last found a creative outlet for himself in this programme. I have seen to my great comfort the same feeling reflected in hundreds of faces all round.

[JANUARY 1, 1956]

I had in my office yesterday 45 farmers who hailed from an NES Block adjoining Hyderabad City. I had met some of them during my recent visit to the area. They are out with their Project Officer on a sight-seeing tour of other projects in India. You will have read of two batches of 450 farmers each who have been out on a similar excursion from Bombay State. In fact, it is Bombay who showed the way for this new type of pilgrimage and they deserve high compliments from all of us on the innovation.

The 45 farmers who sat in my office for more than an hour are part of a phenomenon which will take us yet some time fully to appraise. The change in the outlook of these naive sons of the soil who had never before been out of their small circle, their sense of wonderment at the size and greatness of India, and the way they have begun to assess the relative value of their all-India citizenship *vis-a-vis* the citizenship of a village or at best an individual State, signify an unmistakable revolution in the making.

Similar excursions by farmers from many other States are already under way.

First Plan in Retrospect

The Community Development Programme, from whichever angle we may look at it, has been the most potent of people's movements since we won our independence, and assuredly it is the most important contribution of the First Five Year Plan. The Government agency, suspect heretofore in the eyes of many, has acquired a new stature and dignity. The people in the countryside, who were considered the last stronghold of inertia and superstition, have also given an account of themselves exceeding by far the wildest of our own expectations. People's representatives, who were aloof and critical, have also begun to take interest in the movement in increasing measure. There has also been better appreciation by others in the Government machinery of what the programme involves, although much yet remains so far as the active participation of departments is concerned.

The Prospect

The Second Five Year Plan, which is round the corner, has programmed the coverage of the country as a whole. It means that the success of the movement hereafter can only be to the extent that others in the Government play their part. We come straight to administrative co-ordination. Here, it is not enough that Collectors are already in the picture. The departments have to take their due responsibilities, and co-ordination at the ministerial level through the State Development Committees will have to be a regular feature hereafter. The organisation handling the Community Development Programme should have no other role except that of co-ordination.

On the programme side, the First Five Year Plan, so far as this movement is concerned, has meant concentration on agriculture, education, public health and communications. Our emphasis has now to shift to new fields—village industries, co-operation, Panchayats and the movement of women and children. At the stock-taking in the year 1960-61 our success will be measured

by the extent to which we have succeeded in creating additional employment and providing relief for the under-employed, and the institutional patterns we have developed to take care of the administrative, economic and cultural needs of people.

We next come to the level of performance. It is quite obvious that there will hardly be in future a Project Officer who by himself will be able to exceed the performance in the top project of today. We invariably fall back, therefore, to the basic principle of extension, which we should begin to apply now to our own personnel. I mean inter-project and inter-State visits by our staff, with a view to sharing the pooled experiences of the country and raising the level of the weakest link to approximate to the strongest. Inter-State seminars, and inter-project and inter-State visits by our staff, will have to be introduced as a regular feature of our programme in all fields.

[FEBRUARY 15, 1956]

"As I would not be a slave so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy. Whatever differs from this, to the extent of the difference, is not democracy." This motto is from the greatest American that ever lived—Abraham Lincoln. This programme of ours, as we have been discussing between ourselves from time to time, is a continuation of the battle for freedom following our release from the clutches of colonial rule.

Freedom as a basic concept is totally indivisible. It logically follows therefore, that there can be no real freedom unless it is shared by all alike. In a democracy we have three clear categories of citizens. They are the people, the people's representatives and the people's servants. (We must bear in mind that in the new context a servant is a servant for specific purposes only. His profession as a servant does not and should not deprive him of the freedom he should claim as a citizen in a democracy). Following the retreat of colonial rule from India, the vacuum had to be filled by the people through their chosen representatives. This had to take place at all levels, from the ground to the top. The Government agency, which formerly was an instru-

ment for repression in the hands of the colonial ruler, had to be harnessed to the service of the people as the people's own instrument.

To the extent, and where, the transformation has taken place in the Government agency, and the organic link has been successfully established between the people and their representatives, there is no problem. Where this has not taken place, and as a result the Government agency and the people's representatives, real or so-called, are vying with each other for filling the void, there is trouble. We see it happening right before our eyes. What is worse, the bitterness of the struggle threatens to increase.

Curiously enough I find that a number of non-officials who should have had sympathy for the problems with which the Government agency is faced in the turbulent transition of today seem really to be jealous of the influence exerted by the Government servant on the people around him. In like manner I find a sad allergy on the part of many an official towards non-official representatives. Being caught in between the two fires I try to understand, as best as I can, the psychology of both with their strength as well as weakness. The clear complex of inferiority which leads to these symptoms has to have a remedy. I continue searching for it. I realise that there is no future unless the officials and the non-official representatives of the people have a clear understanding of each other's role and are prepared to accommodate each other as leaders and instruments of action in our growing democracy.

As I have indicated to you in my previous letters, I have been struggling for several months to bring about better understanding on this score. I attended the constructive workers' session that preceded the All-India Congress Session at Amritsar recently. I shall continue my pleading in the non-official camps regardless of parties or politics, as to me, and I believe it will be to you also, it is a matter of faith that in this programme of ours there is room for common understanding and common action. There is no scope for politics as we have known it heretofore, or for group rivalries between categories of our own citizens.

Personnel for Second Plan

Nothing has hampered our programme more than the shortage of trained workers. I do hope you are taking adequate steps in collaboration with the other departments in the State to provide for the training of workers requisite to the expansion we have in view for the Second Plan.

We are eager to intercede on your behalf, with whatever agency it may be, to assist you in the attainment of this objective. I would, therefore, like you to come prepared to pose problems, if any, in which we can help, during the forthcoming Development Commissioners' Conference at Nainital.

Project Accounts

Project accounts not unoften are in a maze, and have even driven one or two officers crazy. This is a bad omen. We should do all we can to see that trained accountants are posted to the NES and CD Blocks so as to relieve the Block Administrative Officers of the avoidable strain of accounts, which are a bugbear to even the bravest amongst us. The Accountant-General in the States should help in this training. If we can do anything through the Auditor-General, please let us know.

What After the Projects?

As the 1952-53 projects approach the dead-line for their closure, I see gloom and misgivings writ large on the face of many of our co-workers in the field. It will require a good deal of thinking by us at the forthcoming Development Commissioners' Conference as to how to maintain the tempo of work by the people, development being a continuing process and we having merely scratched the surface by now. I am glad this is also an opportunity for doing some real heart-searching and discovering from the practical lessons of a four-year ordeal whether we did succeed in emphasising the educative aspect of the programme and the development of people's own institutions to carry on as successors, or whether we emphasised only the physical aspect of the programme. In a programme of this nature, we can afford some mistakes, and mistakes there are bound to be in spite of

all the precautions and forethought we may adopt. But mistakes will serve their purpose only if we are prepared to learn from them.

Proper Organisation of 'Shramdan'

Shramdan is now an integral feature of development in India. I am afraid, however, that this work is not being done with the method that the madness calls for.

Shramdan work must be conducted with the discipline and methods employed by fire-fighters, if I may give an extreme example, in quenching a fire. There is tremendous wastage of labour by people because of the lack of method. This is something that will have to be looked into. I am asking our BDO and SEO Training Centres to include this as an integral feature of the practicals in their curriculum. It will also have to be done in the Gram Sevak Extension Training Centres. I would have even liked a manual attempted on this subject. But probably you are already swamped by the plethora of our manuals !

[MARCH 31, 1956]

In a few hours the First Five Year Plan will be over, and we shall plunge into the Second. With the firm decision to cover the whole country* with the National Extension Service and at least 40 per cent with the intensive programme, our work under the Second Plan acquires a new horizon and a new character. In fact, the Community Development Programme becomes more or less synonymous with the total Five Year Plan minus, perhaps, only the large-scale industries, transport, and multi-purpose schemes—all other schemes, especially of the State Governments, being interwoven with the NES and Community Development Programme. There will be no room whatsoever in the Second Plan for isolated functioning of departments. Administrative coordination will acquire a newer significance.

*Appendix I.

A Week as a Gram Sevak

During the last Development Commissioners' Conference at Simla I had undertaken to try the experiment of working as a Gram Sevak on a Gram Sevak's charge for a short period. The main difficulty was to find an area where I could work completely *incognito* and free from disturbance from the Press and other inquisitive minds. I did succeed at last in getting the opportunity for a week in a 1952 project in a State. A week of work in the role of an additional Gram Sevak attached to the existing man, confined only to six villages, brought me face to face with the real character of this programme and its impact on the ground after 3½ years of strenuous effort. It has been a revelation, and in many ways a confirmation of much of my instinctive hopes and misgivings. The experiences are gradually sinking into my mind, and I hope by the time I meet you at the Development Commissioners' Conference I shall have fully assimilated the lessons so as to be able to give you a first-hand picture of what I saw and felt.

The only features I can mention to you at this stage are that the Government organisation working on the ground has undergone a transformation even beyond my own expectation. There is a devotion to work which can hardly be rivalled. The accomplishment has also been substantial. But there is a lot more to be said which I would much rather defer till we meet in person.

Social Education Vs. *Public Works*

No superstructure can endure unless it stands on a solid foundation. How we ignore this vital concept when we go all out to do things based on a handful of rich and influential people in a village who make the bulk contribution to people's participation out of their own pockets or from others' through their influence? If a programme in a village is to endure, it is obvious that it will have to be broad-based and everyone will have to be a willing party to the programme. We come back naturally to social education. We find that the Community Development Programme acquires increasingly the function of extension and

social education as opposed to public works. Maybe, the mad drive we have so far conducted for accomplishment under the head of Expenditure has more to do with the phenomenon I have described than any other factor. Here, again, it is obvious that we shall have to do some real heart-searching when we meet next.

The Village School

There is great demand for Community Centres in the villages. Community Centres cannot be housed in a building alone. The Centre is where the community is. If there is a community in the village which is totally free from the poison of caste, creed and political rivalries, it is the community of school children. Is it not logical then that we should aim to make the village school the Community Centre and try to build it up both physically and morally? Such a development will bring about an immediate change in our whole outlook on the village school, and we may find that sooner than we are now ready to believe, we shall have established a village stage, a village garden, a village nursery and a village playground and many other features.

We are working out a new scheme whereby village teachers, numbering about 70,000 during the Second Plan, can be trained for the new dispensation. The resources for the training will be provided mostly by the Centre, the other side of the resources, namely land and the activities associated with the new Community Centre, being left to the initiative of the village people themselves.

Village Industries

By now there has been an appreciable increase in the standard of agricultural production under the impact of the programme. Of course, we have scratched only the surface and a long distance yet remains to be covered. The Second Five Year Plan is directed towards intensification of effort in this direction. However, agricultural activities benefit primarily the people who are landowners. The landless remain more or less where they were except for some of the civic amenities, such as drinking

water wells, roads, lanes, schools, etc. If wages for landless labour are to go up corresponding to the increase in agricultural production, it is inevitable that there has to be the promise of alternative employment to the landless proletariat in the countryside. This can only take the shape of village industries, and in this we have no other recourse except Khadi and village industries and the production of building materials in rural areas, if mass employment is to be the objective. Establishment of industries in rural areas is indicated for other reasons also. The landowner, who secures a higher purchasing power, must have an outlet for healthy spending, in the present context where expansion in land-holding is proving increasingly unattractive because of various governmental measures in prospect.

From all that we have initiated during recent months in the direction of village industries, it will appear that we are working for the establishment of a Village Industries Extension Service. This is something which will require careful study during the forthcoming Conference.

[May 19, 1956]

Double standards in social amenities, one for the rural and the other for the urban areas, cannot avail in this atomic age. All that we are doing today on the social side is still, in reality, a mere apology compared to the infinite pains we are being coerced to take under collective organised pressure in urban areas. If, nevertheless, our programme is appearing over-balanced on the welfare side, it is not because there is an excess of welfare but because there is a gross deficit in emphasis on the economic side. Production must increase in the field of agriculture; there should also be corresponding emphasis on village industries so that the surplus of the former may be primarily exchanged for the surplus of the latter, to the progressive improvement of the tone of living of the rural population as a whole. The question of reducing the welfare activities does not arise. What does arise is a sharp increase in the emphasis on the organisation of the economic activities.

Panchayats and Co-operatives

The Government staff, even under the seemingly liberal provision* under the NES pattern, is hardly adequate even for a fraction of the total requirements of our programme, if these are to be handled direct by the Government agency. People's institutions—the Panchayats on the administrative side and Co-operatives on the economic side—are Priority No. 1 in the new context if our activities are to be universal and not to be confined to purple spots for visitors and for the expenditure statement in the balance-sheet.

Institutions can come into existence through official mandates but they can grow only through the exercise of delegated powers for action, under skilled supervision. Contractors, direct or indirect, are a taboo in this people's programme. Up to the limits indicated, expenditure should be allowed to be incurred by institutions of the people. The risk should be nil or negligible at worst, if there is understanding and active supervision.

We had a tendency to scoff in general at the Panchayats, Local Boards, District Boards and Legislatures, just as many a member of these looked askance at the Government agency. This has changed because we succeeded in carrying conviction—

(i) that the forgotten villager was not a beast of burden like the animals with whom he was huddled together, but was a Man with all the rights and obligations that belong to this king of animals;

(ii) that the Government servant also is a Man and he too has a purpose in the wide scheme of things.

[JUNE 13, 1956]

My invariable experience throughout India is that technical people, including Heads of Departments, are as eager as we are to play their part in this programme, once they get a taste of it. Our seminars offer a unique opportunity for bringing understanding of the programme to technical people, especially those who

*Appendices II and III.

are high up. Appointment of the Heads of Technical Departments as chairmen of sub-committees in seminars should further help to bring about this understanding. I have seen this happening in practice. We have recognised that the physical content of the programme will be determined strictly by the technical content that we put into it, and this in turn will depend on the quality and interest of our technical personnel. One of the ways in which technical departments, especially those functioning at the district headquarters, can be brought more fully into the picture will be by encouraging them to report to the Collector at the district level as to the interest and co-operation of the BDO in the respective technical programmes which the departments at the districts are expected to implement through their representatives at the block level.

Wooden Bureaucracy

A school building for which 50 per cent contribution had been made by the village people needed a third window on a wall, which the villagers were prepared to make extra payment for. This, I understand, was refused by the P.W.D. as this did not fall within the standard specifications of a school building in the State. In another place, payment for a village school built by joint participation has been held up because the villagers have added two more rooms to the original specifications, totally at their own cost. These, I know, are aberrations, but they indicate the limits to which lack of imagination in the functioning of Government can travel.

Bharat Darshan

"Bharat Darshan" trains carrying village leaders all across this sub-continent promise to be a regular feature from now on. The programme for these villagers should include visits not only to places of pilgrimage and the big projects of Government *en route*, but also to as many NES and Community Project areas as can be conveniently managed. These visits and their duration should be so spaced as to permit free exchange of ideas between the visitors and the representatives of the local people.

The four to six weeks of life together, for diverse elements hailing from different areas in a State, can also be utilised, if carefully planned, to serve as a mobile camp for the training of village leaders by including social education as a regular feature of the evening programme.

Community Development Abroad

From the latest reports I have, the Government of Indonesia are now well set for the launching of 20 projects (as against 16 which I had recommended during my visit there last year), on the 17th of August this year—the anniversary of Indonesian Independence. One of our workers is now in Indonesia, assisting that Government in working out the training programme for the first set of workers. A similar programme, I understand, is also in the process of being implemented in Nepal. There are also other countries coming up. I send this news to you as I know you will be interested in this steady growth of our wider kinship in a vital, life-giving movement.

[JULY 16, 1956]

It is true that the Collector is the key to the programme in the district. Yet with the terrific burden which he carries on his shoulders today, I do not see how we can expect him to do very much. We invariably come back to the Block Development Officer. He is a person who has no responsibilities other than development—development of himself and of the environment around. Where he is of the right type, the whole area vibrates with a youthful exuberance. Where he takes himself to be just another functionary of Government, we see only targets, we do not feel the human pulsation behind.

I am convinced, after long discourses with myself and others in the programme and outside, that our first effort should be to vitalise and humanise this key functionary. For this, the first course indicated is that we make recruitment of BDOs in the future from all ranks. There must be a mixture, for instance, of the revenue and the development services in the States, the open

market, the retired Army personnel and the promoted Village Level Workers as the sources of recruitment for this key position. This mixture will be conducive to the requisite flexibility of outlook.

Local Institutions

Local institutions—Panchayats, Co-operatives, and the Block Advisory Committees—must grow in initiative as also in capacity for planning and administering the local needs of people, unless the Village Level Worker, who has to be an extension adviser to the people, is to end up as the record-keeper of development expenditure and targets.

It is only because this development is still overdue and the real objective of the programme is still to be realised, that Government have agreed to a continuation of operation for a further period of three years of all blocks which have completed their so-called intensive period of development. You will have received the CPA communication, conveying the revised budgets and financial allocations. A communication is also being issued shortly regarding the manner in which the annual budget of Rs. 25,000 for local works and Rs. 5,000 for social education is to be utilised for the additional three-year period, in the post-intensive phase.

Briefly, as you will remember from our discussion at Nainital, the intention is to utilise these funds strictly according to the decision of the Block Advisory Committees. Schemes are to be planned and implemented by the village institutions and expenditure is to be incurred by them. There should be no departmental works. In fact, departmental activity except in the role of extension will be an acknowledgement of the earlier failure of the programme.

If we have failed to build up local institutions with the requisite initiative and experience during the earlier phase, the further lease of life is only a concession to ourselves to make up this vital gap in our performance. Our organisation handling the programme from the Centre down to the ground will be judged

by the present Government and posterity by the extent to which we are able, during this extended period, to build up, educate and vitalise local institutions of the people and offer opportunities thereby for Government staff to function as real advisers to the people in their varied needs of life.

We are taking action to speed up the creation of the Committee to study Local Self-Government institutions in India and abroad, so as to give us a broad line of approach to this question based on a pooling of knowledge. We should be able to have more light on this sometime during the early part of next year. Meantime, we can concentrate on the village Panchayats, the Co-operatives and the Block Advisory Committees and see that these are built on solid foundations on which the superstructure can be erected according to the knowledge we gather later.

Pattern of Development

So far there has been one single pattern of development under the programme, which has been applicable generally to the whole of India with only such modifications as local initiative could attempt. As the printed word has a special sanctity of its own in the eyes of all of us, somehow the standard pattern influences all our thinking. In the CPA, we are now working out four different patterns of development for : (i) coastal humid areas; (ii) the plain areas; (iii) the mountain and hilly areas; and (iv) the aboriginal areas.

The hope is that these will provide further stimuli to local adjustments in the programme which individual areas will demand.

[AUGUST 19, 1956]

Regardless of what we may or may not do, the success of our programme will be strictly proportional to the quality of our personnel. Any compromise in this matter will react to the detriment of the programme not in arithmetic progression but a geometric one. We in the CPA have been increasingly concerned about the advancing age represented in the trainees sent

to our S.E.O.s and B.D.O.s Training Centres, as also by the increase in the incidence of unresponsiveness to the programme among them.

We are fairly convinced that, but for exceptional cases, the age of entry to the programme in whatever capacity it is, at the block level and further down, should be limited to 35 or near about. We should also make sure before we confirm our selection that the candidates selected evince active and genuine interest in the programme. It is no use forcing an unwilling person into this programme just because he happens to be subject to the so-called "Fundamental Rules". "Fundamental Rules", you and I know, make the least contribution to this programme.

Pilot Projects

Pilot projects mean controlled observations at a limited number of key points, which may lead to wider application later. The danger today is that pilot projects begin to be universalised before the pilots have even been conceived. Whether in the matter of Panchayats, Co-operatives, functions of different specialists, of co-ordination or integration between them, or between them and others, our enthusiasm and self-confidence drive us to universalise new thoughts and ideas before they have had a chance to prove their merit. The scientific approach to the quest gets lost, and it grows to be a question of prestige. There can be nothing more fatal to a programme such as ours. I may tell you that no single factor has hurt the programme more than these persisting attempts at short-cuts.

My plea, therefore, is that we conduct all pilot projects in the future, whether sponsored under the Centre, the State, the district or the Block, only on a limited scale. For instance, if it is a women's programme which is to be taken up as a pilot project in a State, let it be confined to a few villages in a limited number of blocks which have shown the most outstanding response under the normal programme. Let these areas be singled out for intensive application of new ideas under careful observation. Our programme is comprehensive enough to provide room

for the most daring of experiments, provided these are conducted as experiments and not as administrative expedients or egoistic adventures.

The Reading Habit

I have been making frequent enquiries during my visit to projects as to what use is made of the increasing bulk of literature pouring in to our personnel from the Centre as also from the State Headquarters. I find to my dismay that reading as a habit is growing to be a progressive rarity. We have to do something to correct this situation.

Knowledge is the first requisite for one who is engaged in extension. The literature meant for our programme is designed especially to provide in a nutshell whatever Extension workers require to know. If these are not used, we cannot but head for serious difficulties.

I thought that in Government Departments there were regular departmental tests for promotions or for advance increments. Could we not formulate some method by which we can make study circles a regular feature of the programme ? I would like you to think this over. It may help if you have this as an item in the agenda of your State seminars. We shall be eager to know the results.

Rural Housing

Rural housing has at last begun to make a modest start under our programme. The Works, Housing and Supply Ministry in the Centre, as you know, have 10 crores of rupees for rural housing during the Second Plan. This is apart from substantial sums offered by the Home Ministry in the Centre as grants-in-aid for housing to depressed classes and the members of the scheduled tribes. There is also some little provision in our own budget.

It appears fairly certain that the programme of rural housing will catch up once agricultural production has gone up, creating surplus purchasing power, and village industries have been

simultaneously promoted with an eye to the needs of rural housing. If housing is not promoted, there is a serious danger that the surplus resources with the people, resulting from increased agricultural production, will tend to find an easy outlet towards the middle-men in towns. This symptom, I may inform you, has already begun to manifest itself in a number of places. We must take heed and see that we promote a programme deliberately such as can absorb the rural surpluses in directions of permanent improvement. I cannot think of anything better in this context than housing, apart from investment in irrigation and allied aids to agriculture.

While on the subject of rural housing, I have to utter a word of caution. You will not find two houses built by villagers which will be identical in size or form. The villager has his individuality which he tries to project. When, however, our engineering mind from the project gets hold of the situation, the individuality gets lost and we tend instead to promote the uniformity of military barracks or of the labour quarters of factory towns. Our engineers and architects can certainly do a tremendous lot in the matter of ground planning as also in the techniques of construction. But they should abstain deliberately from promotion of uniformity in the forms of structures.

II

TOWARDS A PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT

[SEPTEMBER 28, 1956]

THIS communication has been delayed because a rather unfore-foreseen development overtook me*. This brought about some amount of dislocation in my customary programmes.

I have been submerged under an avalanche of letters, telegrams and messages. The expression of affection and sentiments is so deep and touching that I find myself on the verge of tears. It is true that I have worked hard for the cause; but so also have others in thousands. Therefore, when these felicitations pour in from all corners of the land, from people known and unknown, I cannot help feeling like a usurper of collective rights. You must take me for what I have been and continue to be—a comrade working on a common cause. The honour, if I may say so, belongs to the organisation.

The Movement Comes of Age

The event over which you have been generous enough to shower your felicitations on me as a person, means something much deeper than what appears on the surface. In a democracy Ministers will come and go. This is a routine phenomenon. But Ministries do not come into being with that ease, especially a Ministry such as ours which has no direct subject-matter of its own, but which is charged with the responsibility of acting as a lubricant, for the entire machinery of Government in its approach to the people. In the history of democracy this seems to be without a precedent.

*With effect from September 18, 1956, the Community Projects Administration was converted into a Ministry at the Centre, with the author as Minister for Community Development.

Four years ago, on October 2, 1952, a limited number of solitary souls started on a pilgrimage. Faith in themselves and in India was their primary stock, with but a modicum of administrative experience behind. "Village people are dead; they cannot be awakened. Government servants are a useless lot with no roots in the soil. The people's representatives are too far away from the people." These were the phrases that were being flung about. What has happened since is a well-known story. A third of the country already stands covered by our programme, and the rest is aching to get into action. The movement has come of age.

Emphasis on Economic Programme

Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, based on irrigation on the physical side and co-operation as a principle of work, account for the bulk of India's productive effort. We thought we had grown self-sufficient in food, the basic need of life. The world showered bouquets on us. But, alas, jubilation was short lived. Prices mounted as scarcity loomed large, and we had to borrow from others to feed ourselves. No nation can retain its sovereignty for long if it is to depend for food on continuing loans from others. Our tall talk turns out to be a sham if we are not wise and competent enough to be able to provide ourselves two meals a day with our own labour, despite the good earth, our great rivers and the oceans around which have never failed to shower their abundance on us.

That the amenities programme of our movement has appeared rather out of proportion to the less spectacular efforts on the economic side, has been due mainly to the lack of active understanding with, and resources in, the departments handling economic programmes. This has to be corrected.

We are already in active discussion with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture with a view to bringing about closer alliance in this vital and long overdue effort. Ways shall be found to bring about a combined impact. We propose jointly to take up the question with State representatives, both of the respective depart-

ments and of the Community Development agency. We have no doubt that before the year is out we shall be ready to launch a vigorous economic programme with the same passion as characterised the October Movement in 1952.

A People's Movement

On the administrative side, the creation of the Ministry introduces a new feature. The official organisation, headed by one who functioned till yesterday in the role of an official, did its best, virtually unaided, to energise the people. A Government agency cannot act as a substitute for the people's leaders. The present change in the character of the organisation will now make it possible to enlist the more active support of non-official representatives of the people at all levels, from the ground up to the nation's Parliament. This means that our effort to turn a Government programme with people's participation into a people's movement with Government participation, will have a fresh fillip under the new dispensation.

[OCTOBER 19, 1956]

The Members of Parliament have already begun to take an interest in this programme even exceeding my own expectations. I know that the same will follow in the State Legislatures. It will be possible for me now to work even more closely with non-officials in an effort to enlist their active participation in the role which can be theirs alone. Officials, non-officials or the people, for better or worse, spring from the same common stock. Any gap in understanding between them can but end in disaster in the long run.

The Post-Intensive Phase

With this as the background I would like to come straight to the subject of the post-intensive phase of our programme. "Normalised block" is an expression that has gained an unhappy currency. Normality, as the very expression implies, has an

element of the sense of arrival. "Normality" and "dynamics" exclude each other. In the India of today, especially, normality can only mean the evils which we as a nation have inherited from the past. The tribal instinct in dealing with distant neighbours, rigid casteism in dealing with each other, sheer lack of discipline in personal conduct, idealism in theory but cannibalism in practice—these are features which still predominate in us as a people. Is this what we are to relapse to as the consummation of all our heroic effort over these years?

Those who have been working on this programme have acquired one virtue by now, namely to be honest to themselves at least in thinking. We know what the normal administration of Government means in reality, what the common man for instance has to go through even for getting a timely receipt for payment of his dues to Government. Normalisation in this context can, therefore, mean but a relapse to the outworn practices of yesterday. The concept of the "normalised block" must be therefore discarded and forgotten. We may substitute the expression "post-intensive block", which we accepted at the Development Commissioners' Conference at Nainital.

The post-intensive block does not mean that we have done during the intensive phase the major part of what was needed to be done. You will agree that we have barely scratched the surface. When you think of the villages of tomorrow, I would like you to compare in your mind a modern mofussil town that you know today, with what you knew of it 25 to 50 years back. The same comparative degree of development if not more, at least in physical terms, must apply when we consider our villages of tomorrow.

Imagine, for instance, the bulk of our land yielding three crops a year with improved methods and techniques of agriculture based on the epoch-making discoveries in the biochemic and atomic fields, with irrigation from rivers and streams, underground sources and artificial rains. Picture to yourself decentralised small industries run on electric power in the bulk of our villages; houses

rebuilt with ample space around; paved lanes and drains, central water supply and underground sewage; maternity, child welfare and health facilities available to all, with the village school as the hub of village activities; Community Centres, open-air theatres and other forms of recreation, and playgrounds for children and adults alike; every village connected to the other, with easy access to fast-moving transport; men, women and children of the village working together, arguing and singing together!

The intensive phase is intended only to be an awakener of the colossus. The real work of extension must begin, with all the emphasis we can bring to bear on it, in the post-intensive phase. It is quite clear by now both to the people and to our workers that it is not possible for our Government to continue to shower the grants-in-aid which poured in during the intensive phase, till we have done at least one round of all the villages of India with the same measure of aid. That is far off. Therefore, if we are to avoid relapsing to the 'normality' of the past, we must make common cause, at least now, with the people.

Our people, through their long suffering, have an understanding of realities much more than we give them credit for. They will understand, if it is explained in the proper perspective, why grants-in-aid cannot flow in larger measure than has been provided for during the three-year period of the post-intensive phase. They will also understand why they have to work harder and more intelligently on programmes of economic development.

The post-intensive phase must concentrate on agriculture above all, for agriculture constitutes the base on which India stands today as a nation. Agriculture, animal husbandry, village industries, co-operation and panchayats are activities which have to be woven together because they are complementary to each other. Any gap in one is bound to react adversely on the other. Therefore, these five activities have to be planned together and implemented together with all the force that we as an organisation can bring to bear. The Government organisation can act but as a catalyst, or a purveyor of modern knowledge and scarce

supplies such as are not within easy reach of the people. People's organisations have to take the prime initiative. They have to be consolidated to take over the responsibilities and powers which have been lying uneasily in the hands of the Government agencies.

Committee on Plan Projects

You will have read in the Press about the creation of a high-power committee which is now headed by the Union Home Minister which will begin a study of all Plan projects. The Community Development Programme has received the place of honour inasmuch as this is the first project which is going to be undertaken for study by this high-power body. I rejoice over this and, I know, so will you. Our programme, may I assure you, will be judged for the future not so much by what we have achieved during the intensive phase, as by the manner in which our people forge ahead with Community Development in the post-intensive phase.

The Second Five Year Plan makes such heavy demands on technical departments in all fields that the problem assumes gigantic proportions. If we were to start an effort for the revitalisation of all technical departments simultaneously, it is bound to end in diffusion of effort. The logical course naturally will be to take up one subject at a time. In this context the recent meeting we held in Delhi between the Central Ministries of Agriculture and Community Development on one side and the State Heads of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry on the other has proved to be one of special significance. This will be followed up by the forthcoming interim conference of Development Commissioners along with State Secretaries of Agriculture. If in the process of planning a combined impact on the food problem, we can work out a procedure for administrative co-ordination between the Community Development agency and the departments of agriculture, animal husbandry, minor irrigation, and co-operation in the States, along with the strengthening of these departments of

Government, we shall have laid the foundation for its later application to other fields as well.

While we plan for measures to bring about closer co-ordination between ourselves and these vital nation building technical agencies, efforts will continue for bringing the representatives of the people closer to the programme. There will soon be an informal Consultative Committee of Parliament attached to this Ministry. We also visualise field visits by MPs to areas of development in different parts of the country. This process can be repeated, with some adjustment, with the members of the State Legislature and others down the line.

[DECEMBER 30, 1956]

A Block is what the staff is, and the staff is invariably what the leader is, namely, the Collector at the District level and the BDO at the Block level. Everything depends on the Collector's interest in the programme and the degree to which the BDO has taken to it as a mission. There are of course the manuals of instruction, and they are now fairly uniform throughout India. But manuals are only points of reference, by themselves they cannot build men.

Women's Programme

The Development Commissioners' meeting which we had in Delhi early this month made certain recommendations for the co-ordination of the women's programme in Community Development Blocks with the activities of the Central Social Welfare Board. These recommendations have been placed before the Board, and a decision is soon likely to taken. From indications I have, it seems fairly clear that the recommendations made by the Development Commissioners will prove acceptable to the Board and we should be ready for implementation of this programme by the 1st of April.

The combination of this predominantly non-official organisation with a predominantly official organisation such as we are, is

one of the most promising developments since we began our programme. The Ministry of Community Development and the Central Social Welfare Board are both new and rather unconventional agencies of our Government. The alliance between these two organisations is bound to make a far-reaching contribution to our programme, if we approach the future with faith and mutual tolerance.

[FEBRUARY 4, 1957]

We should utilise the atmosphere thrown up by the forthcoming elections for spreading social education among the people. This organisation has no concern as to whom the people vote for. But it has every concern to ensure that people do understand our Constitution, the meaning of elections and of the vote they cast. I would consider this to be an essential part of social education. The time is short. I hope all the same that you will be able to make the necessary arrangements for this assignment.

Here at the Centre we propose to utilise the interregnum forced by the elections for clearing ourselves of all cobwebs in thinking and action that have grown since the first flush of the victory of our movement. We are hoping to have a single accommodation in Delhi, where the CPA organisation as a whole can function during working hours as a community in action. We are already engaged in evolving a system which will be self-propelling and which can render an even better quality of service to the States than we offered during the early years of this programme.

The Ministry of Community Development at the Centre receives its terms of reference from the Central Committee, just as the Planning and Development agency in the State receives its terms of reference from the State Development Committee. We have just had today the first meeting of the Central Committee following the creation of this Ministry. The Committee will meet every quarter, and oftener if required. I am asking my office to send you a copy of the proceedings of the

meeting by way of information. I am mentioning this here because I know that this multi-purpose co-operative programme cannot have a smooth passage unless the State Development Committee which has the Chief Minister of the State as its Chairman, and the State Advisory Committee which is headed by the Development Commissioner, function as effective instruments.

While administrative sanctions can be vitalised with the vitalisation of the State Development and Advisory Committees at the State Headquarters, the biggest bottleneck will arise from gaps in technical departments. I have been appalled by the extent of our shortages in technical manpower—executive as well as supervisory—and by the compromise we are being forced to make in the quality and coverage in technical fields. We have to do everything possible to expand facilities for the training of technical personnel.

[MARCH 6, 1957]

The more I think of the epic task which destiny has thrust on us, the more thrilled I feel at the role that the administrator can play in the new dispensation. Administration, deliberately divorced from its regulatory authority, is rising already to the role of an educator. It is but appropriate that the steel-frame on which the denial of independence from foreign rule rested, should also have the task of helping to bring deliverance to the masses of our people, now that the mandate from the ruling power is the establishment of a socialist co-operative commonwealth.

The development of this country cannot be the monopoly of one particular group of people represented in a political party. Likewise the administrative agency cannot have the monopoly of national reconstruction. It is not designed for it either, unless the administrative agency is to become an authoritarian dispenser of doles. Our objective being just the opposite, technical agencies must share to the very full this assignment of national regeneration. Technical people cannot be commandeered to give their best. They can only be inspired. The administrative agency can also serve to clear the hurdles in their way.

As the first step in our programme for the revitalisation of technical agencies it is proposed to substitute technical seminars for the administrative seminars so far held by us. The next series of inter-State seminars will be subject-matter seminars in which the main participants will be the heads of the respective technical departments from the States; the Development Commissioners and others will of course be associated with the seminars. The same system can prevail in the intra-State seminars. Generalist seminars, if they are to continue, could be designed primarily for bringing officials and non-officials together, for a broadening of understanding.

If the process could be initiated, I have no doubt we would have taken the first logical step for the delegation of initiative where it should appropriately rest. With the hang-over of neglect and under-emphasis on technical nation-building departments for ages, the process is going to be a long drawn-out one. But it must begin sometime, if we are to travel in the right direction.

[APRIL 3, 1957]

You will have read in the Press about Mr. Aneurin Bevan's recent visit to NES and CD Blocks. He spent two fairly packed days over these. I accompanied him. We passed through five districts in Uttar Pradesh, saw a good number of villages and institutions, met a fair cross-section of our village people and co-workers, also visited some training institutions and met the trainees and the trainers.

He expressed the view that while only a beginning has been made and a good deal remains to be done, the most amazing element in the situation is that the minority, represented in the top and middle classes of our society, has given the sanction to awaken those at whose sufferance that minority has lived since the dawn of history. From this point of view what is being attempted is rather unique and has vital significance for the growth of democratic socialism. He agreed that democracy in our Parliament and our State Legislatures will be short-lived unless it travels

down to our villages through tiers of self-governing local institutions of the people. The future, according to Mr. Bevan, would be determined by the character we succeed in imparting to these institutions, and by the degree to which we can reduce disparities between urban and rural areas.

Bouquets and Brickbats

While we have received approval of our approach and appreciation of our efforts from friends in India and abroad, you know that there are also severe complaints regarding the waste incurred in the Community Development Programme and its "futility". Opinions will vary, and they must for the health of any organism. We need introspection, however, as to whether we have done all we could to transfer the title deeds for decision and action to the people and their representatives at all levels. The fact that our post-intensive Blocks have posed such a problem for us during the past year will confirm that we are yet far from the people's programme we were charged to build. "People's programme with government's participation", which is our objective, is still a slogan and has yet to develop substance.

Village Camps

With effect from October 2, 1957, we shall organise village camps for the training of villagers, including panchayat and co-operative leaders, in the various technical facets of development covered by our programme. The subjects for discussion will be categorised into five groups more or less as follows: Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, and Minor Irrigation; Village Industries and Housing; Health, Sanitation and Education; Panchayats, Co-operatives, Village Communications; Women and Children.

The camps will be for about three days and will be held at the rate of one camp during a year in every category of subjects in each Gram Sevak circle. Active membership in these camps will be limited to a ceiling of 50, although others, as many as choose to join, may attend as guest observers. The camps will include technical exhibitions on the relevant subjects by the

Departments concerned. Expenditure on exhibition materials will be met out of the respective subject-matter budget under the programme.

The camps will be held by rotation in the villages in the Gram Sevak's circle and will be conducted in the open air, in the village school, the village *chaupal* or *panchayat ghar* or other suitable place which is available. Participants will come early in the morning from their home village, which will be within a maximum of 3 to 4 miles from the site. They will go back late in the evening, after the day's programme in the camp including recreational activities. Each individual will bring his or her own food except where the host village or the project offers a community lunch. The camps will be of necessity be held during the season off from the normal full-time activities of the participants.

The camps will be conducted by the Extension Officers representing the respective subjects in the Block. The Social Education Organiser will look after the organisation of the camp, methods and procedure for the seminars and other arrangements including recreational programme for the evening. The Gram Sevak representing the circle will be an additional member of the staff looking after the camp. Besides this Block staff, the village school teachers, whom we have trained or who take interest in these camps, will also be represented in the committee of management.

The selection of village people to attend the camps will be made by a committee representing the village panchayats, the Block organisation and other non-official institutions. There will be clear criteria to ensure that only those will be selected for these camps who have special interest in the subjects and also have the aptitude and inclination for extending the knowledge pooled, to their compatriots in the villages to which they belong, on their return. This cadre of villagers with short-term training, who should number about 14 million by the end of the Second Five Year Plan, practically at no cost to Government, will provide the base for village development. These camps will also

offer opportunities for non-official members of Block Advisory Committees, as well as members of State Legislatures, to play their role in this programme of extension education. To technical specialists at the Block level these camps will offer an incentive to study their subjects so as to be able to make their contribution and to avoid embarrassment when facing the people. The camps will be a medium for problems from the ground to travel up to the centre, and for answers based on science to travel down the same route. Technical agencies, for the first time, will assume the role of extension educators which is theirs by right.

These camps will mean that Block Advisory Committee members will no longer have to be passive recorders of their signature on the dotted line. The BDO can grow to be the administrator at the Block level which he is intended to be, with his burden shared by technical agencies and by the people's representatives alike.

[April 20, 1957]

The forthcoming conference at Mussoorie promises to be a unique step forward in the sense that this conference will be attended not merely by the Development Commissioners but by representatives practically of all nation-building departments of all States. Apart from officials, we shall have a fair representation of members of the Planning Commission and members of the Central Council of Ministers, besides an appreciable number of important non-officials. What is still more significant is the fact that the Prime Minister has also decided to participate in the conference.

While we shall discuss and review operations as we have done in past years, the particular point on which a decision is to emerge out of this conference is how to enlist wider partnership in our pilgrimage, and share the initiative with new partners—officials as well as non-officials.

We have taken a significant step forward by entrusting the programme of women and children to the Central Social Welfare

Board, who will now be working in the closest collaboration with us. No programme can endure unless it is accepted as their own by women. Therefore the development that has taken place was not a day too early. The Central Social Welfare Board is primarily a women's organisation. Instead of competition in the same field, we have chosen the path of co-operation. This is significant of our maturity as an organisation.

I had the opportunity of attending the recent conference at Delhi of the Chairmen of the State Social Welfare Boards. The Chairman and I explained the full implications of the new arrangement. The Central Social Welfare Board and their workers in the States have grown fully alive to their new responsibilities. I hope our workers at various levels will grow equally alive to the need for complete trust and understanding so that the predominantly official agency of Community Development and the predominantly non-official organisation under the Central Social Welfare Board can work together so far as women and children are concerned, and thereby set the pattern for similar arrangements in other fields.

[MAY 4, 1957]

The programme is ready on all counts to step from the administrative phase, as we have seen it hitherto, to the technical phase. The technical phase constitutes the middle stage between the administrative phase at one end and the people's phase at the other, which is our destination. The generalised services which the administrative agency can offer are limited in content. If the services are to correspond with the crying needs of the people, especially those that relate to production in the field of agriculture and village industries, it is only the revitalised technical agencies who can fill the gap.

If technical agencies are to be brought into the picture, with their own initiative acting as the motive force, it is of utmost importance that we on behalf of the administrative agency even go out of our way, if need be, to provide the dignity which should

belong to the technicians. The stamp of backwardness in us which is symbolised by the abnormal importance enjoyed by the administrative agency in this country must be removed. In any system of balanced growth the technician and the administrator should march together had in hand.

The transition from the administrative phase to the technical phase can be as short as we wish to make it. The lack of experience in our technical functionaries, especially those at levels nearer the ground, can be made up fast enough if the technical functionaries can make common cause with the illiterate but wise masses in our villages. We should be prepared to squat with them on the common grass minus the vestment and armour till now associated with us.

We have decided to confine villagers' camps in the first instance to the group covering agriculture, animal husbandry, irrigation and co-operation. This programme should commence in all Blocks on October 2, 1957. Camps on other subjects will follow.

Agricultural Targets

The Ministry of Food and Agriculture approved during the Mussoorie conference the proposal of concentrating the resources of the agriculture and allied departments in the States in the following order: post-intensive Blocks, intensive Blocks, National Extension Service Blocks and other areas. We have undertaken to assure that the entire organisation at the Block level will be geared for the challenge of 50 per cent increased output in irrigated and 30 per cent in unirrigated areas in the NES and Community Project Blocks. This organisation stands or falls by its fulfilment of the target or otherwise. Failure is unthinkable, for that would mean not merely a collapse of this movement but of the whole democratic structure of society we now visualise. I have no doubt that we will achieve the target and even exceed it. The only way it can be done is by rationalising the resources, decentralising the initiative to the technical

agencies and making common cause with the village people themselves.

[JUNE 22, 1957]

We have had the first meeting of the Informal Consultative Committee of Parliament. The enthusiasm which members displayed over the Community Development Programme was something over which we could all rejoice. The subject for discussion was the "Conclusions and Recommendations of the Development Commissioners' Conference".

Members expressed their desire to spend some time in visiting projects in their State during the intervals between Parliamentary sessions. They are eager to acquaint themselves with all facets of the programme on the ground, so that they could also endeavour to make their contribution as representatives of the people. This indeed is a happy augury. I have no doubt that the State Consultative Committees, when set up, will react equally warmly and that our programme will secure the active association of non-officials.

You will be glad to know that it was decided in the Parliament, before the session adjourned this time, that an early opportunity would be taken during the next session in July to have a full-dress discussion on the recommendations and conclusions of the Development Commissioners' Conference and the Evaluation Report. This means that the proceedings of the Development Commissioners' Conference cease to be merely those of a departmental conference. With the Parliament coming in to deliberate on the proceedings of the conference, the issues we grapple with, and the stature of the conference, acquire a new dimension. I know you will welcome this new development and will rejoice over the wider partnership that it connotes.

Gram Sevaks

Gram Sevaks, we have been claiming, are the key to the programme. I am told that the quality of Gram Sevaks is deterio-

rating because of the rapid expansion of our programme. In the recruitment of Gram Sevaks, it does not seem good enough merely to advertise in newspapers. Newspapers happily or unhappily do not yet travel into the interior of our countryside. The high schools in villages have begun to produce matriculates out of farmers' sons. We should make every effort to see that such boys and girls are attracted to our programme. The only way this can be done will be to send advance notices of our recruitment of Gram Sevaks through the Collector and the Block Development Officer, so that every village in the Blocks could receive the news of recruitment through community notice boards. This will work also for good public relations.

At the recent meeting of the Central Committee the Prime Minister laid special emphasis on refresher training for all our workers now in the field, especially the Gram Sevaks. I find happily that some States have already undertaken programmes for refresher training camps for Gram Sevaks.

[JULY 25, 1957]

I have travelled across a fair cross-section of our projects in a number of States. In a good portion of one State I discovered a galaxy of Tehsildars working as BDOs for us, from within their ivory towers, waiting for people to come to them to make applications for funds. I discovered to my dismay that we had lost good Tehsildars who would have otherwise done some solid work in matters of revenue, and had instead positively bad BDOs who showed no understanding of the fact that their job primarily was one of "Mohammad going to the mountain" and not the other way about. Fortunately, this situation related only to a section of a State. I am mentioning this to you because I thought there might be pockets in every State where this phenomenon would obtain, and you would doubtless like to correct the situation.

On the other side I discovered encouraging developments. We have been talking for years now of vesting our work in the Panchayats. This I saw in operation in one State. Here the

bulk of the Block funds have been divided equitably between the Panchayats in the Block, with allocations under different heads of development. The residual part of the Block budget is reserved for special programmes, as rewards to the best-functioning villages. This has created widespread satisfaction in the villages and has resulted in whole-hearted participation. Panchayats have treated the allocations made to them as nucleus funds to which they have added substantially in cash, kind and labour. Work has been substantial, and the people's contribution far ahead of the Government's share. The burden of routine on the Block staff has eased significantly. Unfortunately the funds of other departments could not be distributed likewise; otherwise it would have been a model programme so far as we are concerned. Efforts are being made to bring this about. I shall arrange facilities for our workers in other parts of India to see and study this development when the time is ripe.

It struck me meanwhile that with the fair degree of administrative co-ordination which has already been established in most of the States by now, we may try out this experiment in a few Blocks. Only thus can we implement the recommendation we have made in successive Development Commissioner' conferences, of entrusting the responsibilities for planning and implementation to Panchayats. Instead of the Block being the unit, this proposal means in practice a step further in making the Panchayat circle the unit of development. It will also mean compliance with the demand made by the Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, ever since this programme began that there should be a panchayat and a co-operative for every village, and that we should transfer the initiative of the development to these bodies as the main term of reference under this programme. I know that the distance from the Tehsildar's paradise to a panchayat is a long one. But distances, we know today, are relative to the mode of travel and the traveller.

Under-staffed Blocks

Expenditure on our programme, I find, is again coming down

although the setback is still not very marked. It is because of the fact that, not unoften, new Blocks are being opened as a ritual without the full complement of staff, even of trained Gram Sevaks. Such beginnings tend to stunt development and the social education of the people, and cannot but act as a permanent handicap to the programme. We have throughout insisted that although an allotment is made to a State, Blocks should be opened only when the full staff is in position. I am sorry this is not being honoured to the extent we thought we had a claim to expect. Now that we are going to cover the country as a whole by the end of the Second Plan, there should be no reason why we should make any compromises on this question even under pressure.

We have been thinking lately whether it will not be a wise step to miss a six-monthly allotment of N.E.S. Blocks in order to complete the staffing in the Blocks already under operation. During the period, we may be able to take care of the refresher training of under-trained personnel. It has not been our practice to take a unilateral decision in such matters. I should like to do this only in consultation with you and I am mentioning it here so that you can also do some serious thinking. We should be able to come to a decision when we meet at the next conference during the winter. This skipping of a half-yearly allotment should not mean any serious upset to our target of coverage as I feel that we should be able to take up work at an accelerated pace, once we set our house in order. It is, therefore, a choice between expansion in diluted operation or a temporary concentration with an increased tempo to follow later.

Village Industries

Village industries still continue to be the weakest feature in our programme. Despite the co-ordination that has been brought about between the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Ministry of Community Development, the marketing of the produce of village industries remains a big problem. Village industries have to be planned primarily for local needs. This can happen if a certain amount of patriotism is generated deliberately for

consumption of local products. Care has to be taken that the industries sponsored are such as will cater to the local clientele. The atmosphere is already charged both in towns and villages for expansion in housing activities, despite the shortage of cement. This shortage will not remain after the end of the Second Five-Year Plan, even though the position is acute at the moment. We should, therefore, promote industries that cater to housing, including the burning of lime. This is a fairly safe proposition. Bee-keeping, sericulture, poultry and fruit-processing are also activities which will find a fairly sure market, both locally as well as outside. We should provide better techniques and better implements to existing artisans, and see that new artisans come in who will produce parts for and maintain improved appliances like tube-well pumps, agricultural implements, improved looms and Ambar Charkha.

Khadi has been claimed to be the prince of village industries; but it can flourish only if our own workers and their close associates from amongst the village leaders take to the wearing of khadi, if not for sentiment at least on the ground that this is a local product and every copper that is spent on it goes to provide employment to people who would have otherwise been dependent on private charity or government doles. This, however, is a matter that cannot be settled through an official mandate. Our Development Commissioners, Collectors and others, I find, are becoming habitual khadi wearers. If we are to propagate local self-sufficiency even as an interim economic measure, we should have study circles and discussions first amongst our own workers on the economic and social implications of this programme of self-sufficiency. We should then involve the village panchayats and co-operatives in the planning and implementation of the programme. Village industries, may I repeat, offer the only promise of permanent relief to the depressed and scheduled classes and the landless.

[AUGUST 20, 1957]

As you will have read in the Press, the Parliament debate on Budget Grants lasted six full hours, perhaps a little longer. The view was vigorously voiced in the House that this programme, which was professed to be one of Community Development, continued as a programme of development with the initiative still in the hands of the Government; that the taking over of the initiative from the Government apparatus by people's institutions was a consummation not only not there, but not even to be seen in the making. It had been a grants-in-aid Government programme with little progress in the economic sector, especially for those who needed an economic boost most. Even here a lot more could have been achieved at the same expenditure if the Government apparatus functioned with understanding, sympathy and competence.

In my reply to the debate I did not contradict seriously the criticisms made on the floor of the House. I did not do so as I could not disagree with the core of the complaints made, although a lot could be said on the issues that were peripheral. Instead, I chose as a spot decision to surrender myself to the House and speak to the members from my heart, free from all reservations, as I do with co-workers in the government. That I could talk so to a House to which I was still a virtual stranger and could be accepted for what I was, that the Budget Grants could be passed without even a murmur from any side, that so large a number of MPs have approached me since with offers of help, is testimony that our people's representatives are aching for an opportunity to play their part in this movement.

A Tier of People's Institutions

Just as in Parliament we have the Informal Consultative Committee, similar Committees in the State Legislatures have to be formed and be geared for the role which is even more intimately theirs in this movement of our rural people. To start with, the members of the State Consultative Committee will have to play the role of the elder brother to the members of village institu-

tions and guide, supervise and prod them as we do from higher levels of Government in relation to levels below. The State Consultative Committees cannot function in a vacuum. Institutions further down must come into being. The village panchayat must necessarily be a live organ. We have no justification to call ourselves the sponsors of a Community Development Programme unless the base institution is made a reality.

The Block Advisory Committees should be the counterparts of the State Legislature at the Block level. As we wrote to you a long time ago, cost what it may, Block Advisory Committees must include the chiefs of village panchayats. Where the number is too large, the panchayats could elect their own representatives. In the biggest State of India, namely Uttar Pradesh, this recommendation was put into immediate implementation. The results have exceeded my expectations. But, alas, our recommendations have not been followed in spirit by all States. Nominations of panchayat representatives at the discretion of local officials is the ritual which has by and large been the upshot of the vital recommendation which was agreed to at two successive conferences of Development Commissioners. How do we expect to make a people's programme if, even in the limited sphere of Block Advisory Commitees, we are not prepared, ten years after our independence, to face the inevitable and make the people's representatives in the village the arbiters of their own destiny?

Reports from Blocks

I find that correspondence with the BDO on routine matters and the demand by various departments for reports from the ground are mounting. This is a fatal trend. This organisation must be saved from being reduced to one of a dealer with papers. Now that the National Development Council in its last session has firmly approved the proposal of treating the Block as a unit for planning and development by Government as a whole, our correspondence and reports on various heads must be co-ordinated and rationalised. Perhaps our own Ministry is not entirely free from

blame. But we are trying to improve. Our administrative intelligence system should grow to full stature if it is to avoid scandals. I say scandals because, according to the quarterly report received from one State for the quarter ending March 31, 1957, we are supposed to have employed as many people in our village industries programme in that State as the target for the country as a whole during the Second Five Year Plan!

The bureaus of economics and statistics in the States should now begin to think in terms of developing into a full-fledged subject-matter department which could serve as the eyes and ears for Government for all its activities. The States have fairly large administrative intelligence systems. These should be fully co-ordinated and linked up with the organisation at the district and Block levels. The Collector and S.D.Os, I am afraid, are not playing their part in checking up reports against obvious fantasies, nor are they perhaps exercising the same vigilance over performance at the field level as they do, for instance, in checking up treasury accounts and other operations as part of routine administration. This is a serious matter to which I would invite your early attention.

[SEPTEMBER 19, 1957]

As you will have seen from the draft report issued by the Committee on Plan Projects headed by Shri Balvantray Mehta, there is a proposal for the formation of a statutory Block Panchayat Board and a District Advisory Council to usher in the democratisation of administration which we have long been looking for and which in fact is the missing link that has caused us most of the headache in this programme. There is also on the wider horizon a parallel development of revolutionary character promising to join us. I am talking of the Gramdan movement ushered in by Acharya Vinoba. These developments, taking place simultaneously, have a special significance.

Farm Leaders' Camps

I am sure you will attend personally at least one of the camps

you are organising for farm leaders from October onwards. Imagine what a revolution it can mean to our economy if we succeed in getting five farm leaders from each village to develop the urge to propagate amongst all their compatriots in the village the advanced methods and practices which distinguish them from the others. The Farm Leaders' Camps are designed to bring to the surface the knowledge and energies that now lie bottled in a select few. They should be eager to share these with others if only we can provide due recognition and dignity to them.

[OCTOBER 23, 1957]

On the 2nd of this month we completed five years of pilgrimage with the first set of projects which we started in 1952. I am not in a position to sum up comprehensively all our successes and failures. But I would like to attempt a broad generalisation. The items on the credit side may be listed as follows:

(1) The forgotten villager has come to the focus.

(2) He has shed his fear of the erstwhile coercive apparatus of Government.

(3) He has shown that he can be progressive in outlook beyond our expectations if he can be convinced of the soundness of the propositions offered.

(4) He has given proof that he can combine with others in efforts for a better life if he is not misguided by reactionaries and designing self-seekers.

(5) The Government apparatus has also shown that it has a soul, and the soul can manifest itself if the climate is there.

(6) A new army of liberation is already in the making.

(7) The abortiveness of unco-ordinated effort has been proven beyond doubt.

(8) There has been expansion in the facilities for training in all spheres.

On the debit side I would list only two factors from which all else follow:

(1) Our failure to create institutions at the village and Block levels such as can take over the initiative from Government.

(2) Our failure to offer due recognition and dignity to technical excellence.

State Consultative Committees are in the process of formation. Panchayats are being set up in all States, and panchayat representatives included as members of Block Advisory Committees. Parliament members have already started taking their due place in the programme. They will be there fully before long. The same will apply also to members of the State Legislature. As for technical officers, I should charge you with the responsibility of treating them as part and parcel of this movement and removing the hurdles on their way.

That our Press and the public have been unduly harsh on us from time to time, and have expected virtual miracles overnight, are but an indication of our impatience as a nation and the expectation of what this new apparatus can wield. I take all this as a compliment.

[NOVEMBER 25, 1957]

You would have heard about the Nizamsagar Project. It is in Andhra State, about 100 miles from Hyderabad. It irrigates several lakhs of acres. We have now a post-intensive project there which belongs to the category of 1952. Three years ago when I first visited this area, the first demonstration plot in the Japanese method of paddy cultivation was being laid amidst the protestations of the farmers. I did my part then in the social education campaign over this matter. When I visited this area

recently, I drove over about 100 miles. I did not see a single plot which has not been covered by the Japanese method, on both sides of the road as far as my eye could travel.

Nearly 84,000 acres have been brought under the Japanese method of paddy cultivation as a result of three years of effort in this project. The production has gone up by 80 to 150 per cent. The farmers are happy. Unfortunately, many of them today are drinking toddy from barrels, not solitary bottles as in the past. This of course is another side of the picture, and shows what can happen if there is a substantial increase in agricultural production without a corresponding improvement in the consciousness of the people, without a corresponding community outlet for the increased earnings.

Once again I came back convinced of what can be done if there is earnestness of purpose. I was also convinced of the imperative necessity of building up the community in the form of institutions such as panchayats and co-operatives, which must take root in every village of significant size as the Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, has been dining into our ears for years now.

Farm Leaders' Training

While on tour I have come across a number of farm leaders' camps and participated in them. I am grateful to you for the pains you have taken to translate this programme from paper to the ground. What I would like to emphasise here, however, is that the holding of the camps is only a minor part of the undertaking. The essence of the programme will rest on how we follow up these camps. The follow-up has to be in two directions.

The farm leaders who go back to the villages have to form the nucleus of a farmers' club or a farmers' union in the villages concerned. The club, in close association with the village panchayat and the village co-operative, will have to draw up a programme for increased food production for every family in the village. The

club can grow only to the extent that the government agency gives recognition to it as the only venue through which agricultural assistance is to flow to the village people.

The more active these farmers are, on their return from the camps, the more exacting will be their demands on the Government agency for organisational support, apart from support in the form of seeds, manures, fertilisers, implements, credit and technical assistance. Therefore, we come back again to the mainspring of our activity. We discover that the utility of these farm leaders camps will be determined strictly by the extent to which we are prepared to develop our technical resources in the Department of Agriculture, and to the extent we are prepared to suppress our own ego at the ground level and let the stature of the farm leaders grow instead.

Balvantray Mehta Committee's Report

The Balvantray Mehta Committee's report has now been finalised in the light of the discussions they have had with the State Governments based on the earlier report which was in draft form. The most significant point the report makes is about the need for democratic decentralisation and the futility of nominated *ad hoc* bodies which never can strike roots in the soil.

Some States have already gone ahead, pending the finalisation of the report, to give effect to the pattern of village panchayats and Block Boards envisaged by the Committee. The Committee in their final report make a fairly flexible approach to the question, recommending that in some States the statutory executive body may not necessarily be at the Block level but may also be at a higher level. But what they put forward as a crucial proposition is that the entire Block staff and Block resources have to be strictly subject to the approval of a statutory non-official organisation, the Block Development Officer functioning as its chief executive, charged solely with development and free from all regulatory functions. This is a significant step forward in the direction of the democracy we have been out to build at the grass roots. I am glad that the large number of our BDOs who have

functioned in a popular way will find a new organisation to share their burdens, and that those BDOs who have functioned as potential feudal princes will find their false ambitions nipped in the bud.

III

PANCHAYATI RAJ

[JANUARY 25, 1958]

WITH the best will in the world and all the sweat that we shed, we shall be building only museum pieces unless we aim at building up the people. Man, however, cannot grow as a social being except through institutions. Hence the recommendation of people's institutions by the Study Team on Community Development. Its report has been discussed in the Ministry, in the Central Committee and then in the recent meeting of the National Development Council. The minutes of the NDC will reach you shortly. In a matter of this import, the Centre cannot be categorical in insistence on any particular form. The essence has been accepted without a dissenting voice. The form has been left to the States to work out, based on local conditions and enriched by each other's experiences.

We have now worked out a staggered programme based broadly on the Study Team's recommendations. The elimination of the distinction between the NES and the CD stage is a long over-due consummation. This, I know, you will welcome. The increased provision in the second stage will be equally welcome. That the programme had to be staggered was inevitable in view of the increasing shortage of key staff, the deterioration in the quality of fresh entrants to the programme, and the burden of supervision which was threatening to throw the programme off gear. Yet we know that a certain expectation has been aroused in the country with our plan for full coverage by the end of the Second Plan. Any undue deferment in the spread of the programme was bound to lead to frustration in areas uncovered. We have found a formula of pre-extension, confined to the limited field of agriculture, which offers at least a compromise. This should help in more ways than I can explain in this letter. When

you get the Ministry's proposal, you should give it as searching an analysis as you can.

Tasks on the Food Front

The National Development Council has given a clarion call for increased food production. The NDC meeting highlighted the fact that we have more than four million acres of land under potential coverage of irrigation. Our marginal food deficit could be wiped off in a year if only we utilised the water which we have harnessed at an enormous cost to the nation, and which is now going waste for want of effort on our side for field distributaries and other requirements.

This, together with the sudden realisation that we have hardly spent 40 per cent of the provision we have under Minor Irrigation in the Community Development Programme for the country as a whole, has come as a rude shock to me. I would like you to implement the proposal for the establishment of a Minor Irrigation Wing in the Irrigation Department of the State to take exclusive care of Minor Irrigation in NES and Community Development areas, as agreed to at the Mussoorie Conference. Likewise we should promote mass effort to provide field channels for irrigation schemes.

Field bunding for conservation of moisture can certainly be taken up as a mass operation programme, the way we took up the building of village roads. In fact, our friends in Bombay have already taken this up in several areas.

Colourful Rajasthan

I was in Rajasthan last week. Despite the fact that Rajasthan was formed out of a number of feudal States with their individual loyalties, despite the enormous gaps in their technical organisations, the State has made remarkable progress during the past two years. I do not mean of course that every Block there is a model. But taken as a whole, the State is worth a visit by our workers from any part of India. It is a joy indeed to see the barren countryside taking on a new bloom and the rugged people

in their thousands working together. Despite the woeful shortage of technical staff I mentioned earlier, Rajasthan is the only State which has by far exceeded the all-India accomplishment in Minor Irrigation. If I have mentioned Rajasthan in particular it is because I do not know a single State in India which has the disability with which Rajasthan started, and which has to work with nature less hospitable.

Show-pieces?

Throughout the country we have built up an enormous number of institutions—schools, *panchayat ghars*, recreation clubs, information and community centres, village latrines, bathrooms attached to wells, adult education centres, youth clubs, *mahila mandals* and what not. Are we sure these institutions are being exploited to the full? Enrolment in schools, especially of girls, is pitifully small. *Panchayat ghars* and co-operative godowns by and large are rarely open except for ceremonial occasions and visits of VIPs. I recognise that institutions and buildings are good to see and offer visible emblems of our effort. I should have thought, however, that all the pounding that we have received in the State Legislatures, Parliament, the Press and the successive reports of the Evaluation Organisation, would have made us strive for the fullest utilisation of institutions.

[MARCH 31, 1958]

We have throughout been alive to the fact that our yield in agriculture is about the lowest in the world. Every one agrees that even a hundred per cent increase is not so much a problem of high science. Seeds, composts and green manures, chemical fertilisers to the extent available, line sowing, inter-culture, irrigation, field bunding and plant protection measures are by no means highly technical problems. They are mainly matters of organisation. We have all the funds we need and the know-how. We are committed to the concentration of our workers' time on agriculture, if need be even at the expense of other items.

What is holding up the programme then ? And why is it that we cannot make the fullest use of the irrigation potential created in the NES and CD areas whether through major schemes, tube-wells or other programmes of Government? Why can't we provide the field channels through popular effort based on grants-in aid and loans for which money is going abegging? Pray, how can we call ours a Community Development Programme if we fail on this life-and-death question ? What can we do to help you re-orient the outlook of our workers on the ground ?

Panchayat in each Village

Now that this Ministry is taking up the subject of panchayats, recently transferred under a Presidential order*, we propose to go all out to establish panchayats in every village as the first item in the agenda of our programme. We must ensure that all activities within the village become the responsibility of the panchayat, for planning as also for implementation. We propose also to establish village co-operatives to cover every village, and village schools to serve as community centres for the children and the adults alike. This is a mandate from the Prime Minister. I am determined to see it through. The proposal for democratic decentralisation, recommended by the Balvantray Mehta Study Team, is under examination by all States. We shall have the opportunity for stock-taking when we meet at the forthcoming National Conference on Community Development. But regardless of the decision on intermediate levels, village panchayats, village co-operatives and village schools are subjects on which there are no two opinions. These institutions must be created and nursed with all the earnestness we can command. In the process, our burden will be lightened and the programme enriched by the sum total of the vitality of all the people covered by it. We have so far run a development programme hoping that the community would grow in the process. It has been a sad error. Community must precede development. It cannot work the other way about.

*The subject of Panchayats was transferred to the Ministry of Community Development with effect from March 10, 1958.

[MAY 10, 1958]

The Speaker of the Lok Sabha inaugurated yesterday a Study Circle in Parliament on Community Development. I hope to have before long about 100 members of Parliament participating in it. Community Development can flourish if the physical efforts we make on the ground continue to be supported by a growing philosophy, which alone will provide the nourishment. The Study Circle can help in promoting this philosophy through pooled thinking at the national level. Community Development cannot grow into an enduring national movement offering the synthesis that the country calls for, unless it becomes a living philosophy for all the conscious citizens. Can there be a better beginning than with Parliament, the highest forum of the nation ?

Parliament members are now going on recess for nearly three months. They are keen to play their part in the programme. I have made an appeal to all members to go out to the villages at their convenience, give a word of comfort to our workers who are slogging in obscurity, and also to pull up those who show signs of stagnation. Members of Parliament can also participate in our Gram Sahayak Camps.

A Crucial Decision

You will have read in the Press, and also have heard from the Ministry, regarding the decision endorsed recently by the NDC on the staggering of the programme and on democratic decentralisation. The elimination of the distinction between the NES and CD Blocks is a major step forward. With this artificial distinction gone, we shall be spared a lot of confusion in the interpretation of the programme. The enhanced budget provision for the post-intensive block, the re-adjustment of the budget pattern, the pre-extension phase of one year confined exclusively to agriculture, and the consequential rephasing of programme coverage, are features distinctly to the advantage of the programme.

In a country of the size of India and with the diversity in the stages of development between different areas, it is not logical to

expect the same pattern of decentralisation and democratisation in all areas. Village panchayats, villages co-operatives and village schools have been accepted as the basic institutions throughout India and been incorporated as essential prerequisites for the implementation of the programme, as conveyed in the formal letter issued by the Ministry. But at higher levels, the institutions of people may be at the Block, Taluka or the District level according to the conditions obtaining in individual States.

What is crucial is not the level at which the intermediate body is established, but the substance of power that is agreed to be shared by the State Legislature with the local institutions. Independence has been won, but freedom cannot be secure until the powers of government are exercised by the pepole from the village upwards in progressive measure. The aim should necessarily be to ensure that the maximum of autonomy is enjoyed by the people's institutions on items of the programme which come within their orbit. The State of course cannot divest itself of residual powers and safeguards. What is material is that not merely in implementation, but what is much more important, in the making of decisions, the responsibility vests in non-official representatives of the people who alone in independent India reflect the hopes and aspirations of the people and hold their mandate.

The Problem of Personnel

The Training Centres run directly under the Ministry of Community Development can reach only up to a point. The major sector of training relating to the Gram Sevaks and the subject-matter specialists, both initial and in-service, are vested in the States. You will have received by now our final recommendations in this regard. You will have to take urgent steps for the implementation of your part of the assignment. For this, an officer in the State exclusively in charge of all training programmes, attached to the Development Commissioner, is the first requisite. This key functionary is not still in position in some States. The Ministry of Community Development has undertaken

to share the expenditure on this functionary. I would request your earnest attention to his early placement.

[MAY 28, 1958]

Looking back on the Mt. Abu Conference on Community Development the following appear to me as the highlights:

(1) *Block Development Committee*: The Block Advisory Committee will be no more. Out of the debris of our experience arises the Block Development Committee, consisting of the representatives of the panchayats elected by them, apart from MLAs, MPs and others. Appropriate measures will be taken by State Governments to see that these Block Development Committees develop healthy conventions. The approval of general proposals and individual schemes will be vested in the Block Development Committee. Only exceptional cases will be referred to higher levels for decision. Let this be the transitional training ground on which the statutory bodies can later be based.

(2) *People's Associates*: The Community Development Programme till now was regarded as movement of the people, the people's representatives and the people's servants. A fourth party joins us hereafter. They are the people's associates. The people's associates will hail from all sources—Bharat Sevak Samaj, Bharat Yuvak Samaj, Co-operative Unions, Ramakrishna Mission, Gram Sahayaks, Social Welfare Board, All-India Women's Organisations, Adimjati Seva Sangh, Sarva Seva Sangh —in fact every possible non-official agency which can offer voluntary workers prepared to contribute to the programme. Gram Sahayaks perhaps will constitute the most important source.

(3) *Functional Competition in place of Communal and Political Pulls*: There will be sub-committees of the Block Development Committee and of the Panchayats, representing various facets of development. These will include members of the Panchayat or the Block Development Committee according to their special aptitude and inclinations, and also the people's associates from the sources mentioned earlier. The idea is to start

a new spiral of competition at functional levels, as against the communal and political pulls by which our village institutions are often torn asunder. These sub-committees will commit many a mistake, as indeed they must if they function at all. Self-Government does mean learning the art of Government through trials and errors. Who are we to deny them this right? What is Community Development if the Community is not to learn by its own experience?

(4) *The Basic Institutions* : Village panchayats and village co-operatives will be the basic institutions to which the utmost delegations will be made in respect of planning and implementation of the programme falling within their orbit. These institutions will marshal the resources of the community for programmes of permanent economic and social improvement. The village school will be another nucleus of community activities, for the children and youth.

(5) *Woman the Prime Mover* : Woman is the prime mover behind society. She must be awakened. For this there will have to be long-term as well as short-term measures. A concerted drive has to be launched for enrolment of village girls in the school. Where a woman teacher is not available to facilitate this development, a school mother will be appointed from the local community on a small honorarium. Gram Lakshmis or Gram Kakis are being tried out with conspicuous success in U.P. and Rajasthan, and will be adopted as a short-term measure in all areas with funds earmarked for the women's programme. There are also other budget heads under which women should have their due share.

[JULY 17, 1958]

We propose to concentrate hereafter on the implementation of the recommendations of Mussoorie and Mt. Abu. We have done enough thinking for the past six years on approach and philosophy, on principles and objectives, on targets and accomplishments. What is needed now is to see what difficulties there are in giving effect to these recommendations. Thus

alone can we bring into focus issues of a regional or national character which need to be tackled at various levels. Officers of our Ministry who visit the States in a team will apply themselves more rigorously to the study of these questions.

Simultaneously, we propose to take up research into one or two typical questions on each subject, relating to their implementation. The Action Research programme which was initiated first by the U.P. Government is proposed now to be taken up by this Ministry for wider application. We propose, however, not to encroach on subject-matter research which is the field of specialised institutions already set up by Government under different Ministries and Departments. Our research should be confined more to methodology, by way of discovering whether or not something which is being done somewhere can be done elsewhere.

The Mussoorie Institute

The Central Institute of Study and Research has at last been established at Mussoorie. Although the permanent staff is still to be secured, the first course has been run, primarily with the resources of this Ministry, other agencies in the Centre, our friends in the Universities, the Development Commissioners and others whose services we could tap. My brief experience of this first course made me feel guilty that we did not start the Institute earlier. It was indeed very wrong on our part to assume that Collectors, BDOs and Heads of Departments, busy as they are, could be baptised in the objectives and the philosophy of the programme just through casual seminars.

Although the first course was more or less an exploratory one, I am fairly satisfied with the character of the instruction and the results achieved. The trainees, I am convinced, left Mussoorie a good deal wiser, less sure of their previous knowledge. We propose to increase the enrolment for the coming courses. I hope you will not only send a larger contingent of trainees regardless of the inconvenience to the State arising out of their short absence, but also participate to the extent you can in the programme of instruction.

[AUGUST 28, 1958]

You will have read in the Press the report of the debate on food. Food is causing anxiety to every member in the Parliament. There was recently a conference in Delhi of the Agriculture Directors and some Development Commissioners from States. We had a meeting about a week ago of the Central Committee also.

We know that an Agricultural Extension Officer with hardly any field experience, and one Gram Sevak for 1,500 families, are grossly inadequate for approaching every family covered by the Community Development Programme. There is a shortage of fertilisers which we cannot make up however hard we may try. The projected fertiliser factories will take time before they take shape and go into production. Our foreign exchange crisis meantime precludes any substantial increase in the import of fertilisers. Our cattle will take time to be upgraded wholesale. Our seed farms are just beginning to produce the nucleus seeds. What do we do meantime? Do we fold our hands and wait till we have the facilities?

Uttar Pradesh tried the Kharif campaign in a fairly big way. Other States have also tried campaigns on limited scales. I would suggest that whatever organisation we have at our disposal in the Agriculture Department and in the Community Development Blocks, let it be geared fully for extension. Try to relieve the technical organisation from the responsibility of routine functions such as weighment, sale and distribution of seeds, fertilisers and implements. If our technical staff, who have acquired technical knowledge at considerable expense to themselves and the country, are to make their real contribution, it is of the utmost importance that they are relieved of all routine functions which can be taken care of by people's organisations such as the co-operatives and the panchayats.

Mass efforts are necessary for desilting and resuscitation of derelict tanks and wells. Every irrigation source that we have must be harnessed in full before expenditure is incurred on fresh schemes.

Every village in India has its cowdung, cattle urine and its heaps of dry leaves which are a menacing sight from the point of view of sanitation. Why should it not be possible to have a mass campaign for a compost pit for every family, so that all this waste material will go into the pits for being transformed into life-giving manure for the soil ? Why not get the panchayats to do this ? We have by now trained over 400,000 Gram Sahayaks, in different parts of the country. Why not put these Gram Sahayaks, the Krishi Pandits and other prize winners in agriculture, to the task of propagating improved practices to about ten times their number ? This by itself should start a snowballing process till every cultivating family has been brought within the orbit of improved practices.

I wish you had been present in the Parliament galleries to witness the anxiety expressed during the debate on food last week. You would have shared my sense of humiliation if you had listened to the defence that the Prime Minister had to offer in the House for our Agricultural Department and equally so for the Community Development Programme which has food production and community organisation as its main objectives.

[NOVEMBER 11, 1958]

The Panchayat Ministers' Conference which met in Delhi early this month brought out the fact that community development is in fact panchayat development. Local Self-Government Departments in the States have been unwise in playing a secondary if not nominal role in this vast movement. The participants in the conference have gone back with determination to assume the role which is theirs in the movement.

At the meeting of the National Development Council which followed, the Prime Minister expressed his disappointment over the relative failure of the Community Development movement to achieve the popular initiative which was its objective. He also pointed the way out. The clear directive has come from the highest forum of government, namely the NDC, that the Panchayat, the Co-operative and the Village School must be

the fulcrum around which all village development must move. It has been laid down that the development of these institutions for their integrated and comprehensive role in village development, shall be the major pre-occupation of the Community Development movement. Once this is achieved all else will follow.

[DECEMBER 24, 1958]

The Additional Development Commissioner from Andhra met me in my office a few days ago. He was exuberant over the enthusiasm released in the 20 Blocks where Block Samithis are in operation. The Development Commissioner of Madras radiates the same spirit now that Madras has passed its Bill for the Block Samithis. The South, as we all know, is conservative by nature. It has been relatively free from the recurring invasions which have been the lot of the North. In a large measure the South conserved and promoted the culture and traditions which we feel proud of as Indians. When the South plunges ahead with a new idea, you can take it that they find substance in it. Other States in India are also forging these ideas into concrete patterns suited to their areas. Whether you have a statutory Block Samithi or a simple Block Development Committee such as we have at most places now, it will not make much of a difference in the short run provided the people who man these bodies and those who oversee them have the requisite understanding and the determination to work the system in the right spirit. We have already taken up the production of a series of small guide books, written in simple language. Action is also proceeding for finalising the programme of training of Block Development Committee members.

The training of non-officials will certainly help. But this is not enough. Something more is needed to ensure that in the eyes of our Block officials and others there is a clear shift in priority from Things to People. I have decided to change my own code of conduct to start with. When I am in Delhi, I am making it a practice to meet all delegations of villagers who

pass through Delhi on Bharat Darshan tour or for any other purpose. While on tour, I would like you hereafter to draw up my programme in the districts on a new pattern. Apart from seeing the work in a few villages on the productive side of our programme, I would like to meet the officials consisting of the Collector, District Officers and all the Block Development Officers; the MLAs and MPs of the district; the Mukhias or Sarpanches at the rate of one from every Gram Sevak circle in blocks within the district; and Gram Sahayaks at the rate of one from every Gram Sevak circle in the blocks within the district.

[MARCH 21, 1959]

I send these lines to you from a Nursing Home in Delhi where I was brought with a sharp attack of the heart on February 24. The crisis over after the first 48 hours, I have been convalescing since. You need have no anxiety about me. I am trying carefully to build up and bring back to fighting-fit condition your comrade S. K. Dey whose body is my sole charge at the moment.

As you can imagine, I had nearly been to the other shore of life. I had, therefore, the rare fortune of looking back at what you and I and others have done during all these years. We have reason to be proud of our collective accomplishment, despite all our recognised failings.

I am under the rigid discipline of the doctors in whose custody I am at the Nursing Home. Even this letter is an encroachment on their restrictions. I must not, therefore, tax you and myself, for the time being.

[MAY 4, 1959]

Like all complex tools, the body also is subject to certain laws of maintenance. These can be ignored by its owner only at his own peril. Work is not an end by itself; it is a means to joy. Let us by all means have "devotion to work, but not be addicted to it". This I quote from the advice tendered to me

by our Vice-President when he saw me at the hospital. Work as worship is possible only if the tools are in perfect trim.

The time I have had away from the normal grind and rush of things, has offered me a unique opportunity to look at our programme from a distance. It will perhaps be helpful to recognise certain basic facts of the situation in which we function in India today, and then pose to ourselves the questions that arise from an analysis of our programme.

The facts we must face are:

1. A totalitarian regime can get the things it desires much faster than a democracy, at least to start with.
2. A totalitarian regime cannot continue for very long to be responsive to the pulse of the people. Its desire soon begins to diverge from that of the masses.
3. Democracy means government by the will of the people.
4. People without understanding, based on education, cannot have a will of their own.
5. The so-called will of the people, when they are ignorant, is one which has been conditioned by the rulers or been purchased by them.
6. Democracy is unreal to the extent that the will of the people is removed from the decisions on actions meant for them.
7. Development in an under-developed economy is strictly proportional to the savings that people will make in money or labour.
8. The savings have either to be enforced or inspired.
9. The difference between democracy and totalitarianism lies in the manner in which savings are effected.
10. If savings are to be effected in a democracy, people must share in the thinking and decisions that call for the saving.
11. Government organisation in a democracy cannot be a substitute for this thinking, as it can be in a totalitarian economy or in one growing in that direction.

12. Development demands efficiency at work and initiative in planning and implementation.
13. Efficiency at work depends on training for the job. Initiative depends on the inner urge. Inspiration provides the motive force.
14. Efficiency as also initiative are conditioned by factors common to officials and non-officials alike.
15. Officials and non-officials in India today come from one stock and share basically the same virtues and vices. The distinction is circumstantial and not qualitative.
16. We are a country divided by many loyalties. The centripetal force for unity is yet feeble as compared to the centrifugal pulls to which we readily respond.
17. Freedom cannot be, unless there is freedom from hunger, disease and ignorance.
18. Independence has been won, freedom is still to be.
19. There is no short cut to freedom, as the false prophets claim; the road to the height is always long and winding.

With this back-ground let us now put to ourselves some questions about our programme.

1. Democracy being still in its infancy, could we expect co-ordination of the erstwhile feudal departments even at the State headquarters ?
2. Can co-ordination be a non-fluctuating pattern even at the political level, with the strains and stresses inherent in the processes of democracy ?
3. If co-ordination is difficult even at the State headquarters, were we right in assuming that, by some administrative jugglery, we could achieve it at the District, Block and Village levels ?
4. Can a BDO as the administrative head at the Block level be a substitute for all the technical representatives ?

5. Is it possible for the best of BDOs to function as the leader unless others above him treat him the same way as he is expected to treat others around and below him?
6. How do we get those above the BDOs influenced to act the extension way? Have we gone far and deep enough in this effort?
7. In the prevailing circumstances, is it sensible to expect the BDO to be the captain of a team in the absence of democracy functioning at his level?
8. Can even 10 times the number of Gram Sevaks we now have in the Blocks, cope with the fast-expanding requirements of the people?
9. When we seek people's co-operation, do we think as to why the people should at all co-operate?
10. If the Government programme is to be converted into a people's programme, the responsibility for the programme must vest in them. Is it enough only to give powers to the panchayats and Blocks Development Committees? Can they exercise the powers without the necessary training and understanding of the philosophy and objectives of the programme?
11. Have we really tried to impart this training and the understanding?
12. Has it occurred to us that even this training has to be a function primarily of the people themselves, if it is to be really effective? Have we realised that people cannot do it unless they are organised for the purpose through institutions of their own? Have we understood what institutions mean, and made the effort to build and sustain them?
13. Have we realised that, whether it is in the implementation of the programme or in matters of training, it will have to be a joint effort both of officials and non-officials, and that rigid compartments can be a feature only of iron-curtain countries?

14. Do the officials feel the non-officials round them to be their brothers, born of the same mother? And do the non-officials feel the same way about the officials?
15. If the answer to the above is in the negative, what serious efforts have we made so far to bridge the gap so that we may develop into a democracy based on the people, their servants, their representatives and their associates?

[JUNE 15, 1959]

The fact that the forthcoming Annual Conference on Community Development at Mysore will be followed immediately by a meeting of the State Ministers of Co-operation will serve to confirm the new emphasis on co-operation as a way of life for the socialist pattern of society in India. This meeting of the State Ministers of Co-operation will also help co-ordination between the Community Development Programme and the activities of the Co-operative Departments which will be inseparable in the new context of operations.

New Role of the Ministry

We have done considerable thinking lately on the role that the Ministry here should discharge in the new context. Now that we have been placed squarely in charge of panchayats, co-operatives* and other community organisations and their formations higher up, a redefinition of the role has become imperative.

At the inception, the role of the Ministry of Community Development was to serve as a liaison between Central Ministries on the one hand, and the State Development Commissioners' organisation and the State Governments on the other, in furtherance of the policy of Government that "Community Development is the method and Rural Extension the agency to initiate a process of transformation of the social and economic

*The subject of Co-operation was transferred to the Ministry of Community Development with effect from December 30 1958.

life of the villages." The development block work under the plans of the Central Ministries and the State Government was intended to be channelised. In this way the Ministry has helped in building up an extension organisation and providing the co-ordinating machinery for the various Ministries and departments of the Government for implementing the Plan.

On the above role of the Ministry the Study Team recommended as follows: "A corollary to the foregoing observations would be that whatever work the Central Government is to perform in the fields of agriculture, social education, health, rural industries, etc., should be performed by the Ministry concerned and the Community Development Ministry would only co-ordinate their activities in the block areas. Simultaneously we are aware that certain aspects of rural development cannot receive adequate attention in the Ministries in which they are at present being dealt with. In particular, we mention, co-operation and rural self-governing institutions. These two are so closely connected with the programme of community development that we consider that it would be useful if they are brought under one Ministry—the Ministry which deals with the co-ordination of rural developmental activities all over the country. We have earlier urged that all development work should in future be the primary responsibility of village panchayats and panchayat samitis.. We have also stressed the comparative neglect of co-operative organisations and their importance in the field of rural production. Bringing these two subjects at the policy-making level under one common Ministry also empowered to co-ordinate rural development activities would, in our opinion, ensure more effective work at the Centre and in the States."

In pursuances of the above recommendations, work relating to the two basic institutions, namely panchayats and co-operatives, has already been transferred to the Ministry. There is also the realisation both in the Ministry and in the States that a programme sponsored, directed and dominated by the Government agency has no chance either of involving the people as a whole or of meeting their fast-growing requirements. If the

programme is to grow and endure, there must be democratic growth at the village and block levels, and the initiative for planning and implementation must shift to the people, the Government agency serving as the instrument of the people.

The main emphasis in the Ministry will therefore necessarily be on the building up of the people's institutions such as the panchayats and the co-operatives and their higher echelons at Block and district levels. The build-up will necessarily have to be accompanied by training of the people and their representatives, as also of the Government servants all along the line, for the new attitude and work expected of them. All other activities in the Ministry must be so designed as to be conducive to the development of the community and the community organisations.

As a corollary, the role of the technical adviser in the Ministry will primarily be:

1. To draw up an extension programme which can be implemented by people's organisations in Community Development Blocks, based predominantly on people's own labour and the nucleus funds which we have in the Community Development budget practically in every field, and to supervise the implementation in the field.
2. To help Central Ministries to promote research in the problems encountered in the field, and to help extend the results of research to the field.
3. By way of sample study, to discover difficulties and problems faced by people's organisations in the implementation of programmes and to reflect these to the Ministries concerned with a view to help mould policies so as to make these more conducive to the people's requirements.
4. To influence the formulation of the approach to the Third Five Year Plan so that there would be an assurance of a minimum level of development throughout the country, and that the States'

programmes will be built up to the maximum extent possible in terms of the Blocks; also to be in continuous contact with the Ministries concerned with a view to assisting them in the initiation and formulation of the Ministries' programmes in their respective fields.

It will also be the function of the Ministry:

1. To help supervision by the appropriate Ministry in the Centre of its substantive programmes in the States;
2. To facilitate the Block being treated by the department concerned in the States as a unit for planning and development;
3. To formulate through the Central Institute of Study and Research a programme of training of high-level officers and non-officials, and also to promote research in methodology in association with the Universities, State Governments, our training centres and other institutions.

It is further recognised that people's organisations, which are the main assignment of this Ministry, cannot grow to their stature except through the day-to-day experience of the implementation of programmes which they can carry out on their own with technical guidance from the Block staff and a modicum of financial assistance such as the Community Development budget already provides.

The schematic budget of the Block need not undergo any appreciable change now or even in the Third Plan. There is already a nucleus provision under practically every head of development and this should be designed to meet in part the cost of pure extension programmes based on people's own efforts and people's organisations. The only substantial provision that we have in the schematic budget is under the head Irrigation but, in practice, we have already extended this head to cover rural electrification, soil conservation, and various other

activities connected with land improvement. The only change that we may visualise in the Third Five Year Plan would be the substitution of the heading "Land Improvement and Agricultural Development" in place of the headings "Irrigation" and "Reclamation." The new heading should also include schemes of Animal Husbandry, Forestry and Fisheries. These funds should make an effective contribution to the new priorities of panchayat and co-operative development set before the country. The only other head which will call for a change will be "Public Health", for which we may ask the Ministry of Health to provide the entire expenditure for primary health centres and let the present funds partially provided for this purpose in the Community Development Budget be utilised for public health extension.

By functioning in this manner, the Community Development organisation should, besides promoting the growth of basic rural institutions, be in a position to reflect the will and problems of the people in respect of the whole gamut of rural development.

Co-operative Farming

The goal for India being socialism through democracy, the growth of India means the growth of all her people. The socialist pattern demands that the under-privileged sections of the community will have to be assisted by governmental action to relieve themselves of the handicaps they have developed over the centuries as beasts of burden under the privileged ones. It has been universally agreed that this is to be done without violence.

It is curious in this context that a hornet's nest should have come down on the Government on the question of co-operative joint farming by consent as the future agrarian pattern. No other topic has been the subject of hotter controversy consistenly for months. The heat has only gone to confirm that every idea which offers a forum or a point of vantage to the exploited many will be resisted fiercely by the exploiting few: the big landlords, the big capitalists and the big communalists—in fact all the arch champions of a by-gone age.

[JULY 22, 1959]

Education and training of Government workers in the philosophy, objectives and the physics of Community Development has been an important plank of our programme ever since its conception in March 1952. We have organised a fairly large number of institutions for this purpose*. These, as you know, range from the Extension Training Centre for Gram Sevaks to the Central Institute of Study and Research in Community Development at Mussoorie. We have had, besides, a well-organised system of seminars for our workers all along the line, ending in the bi-monthly meetings at Block headquarters of all the Block staff including the Gram Sevaks. We have produced a fairly large volume of literature—manuals, pamphlets, illustrated brochures, posters, maps, cartoons, etc., besides monthly journals from the Centre, the States and sometimes even from the Blocks. We have produced films and film strips. All these have been sponsored, organised and sustained by the Government organisation primarily by itself, for itself.

This phase of the programme being over, we began lately to think of the next—the "People's Phase". In our effort to attain this objective, we have concentrated till now on legislation and on administrative instructions. We seem somehow to have ignored the fact that if legislation by itself could offer the panacea, untouchability in India, usury, and the tyranny on land, should have been relics of a remote past by now and not the challenge which they continue to be.

Training and Education of the People

Mandates and manuals may work wonders in a monolithic State run under a totalitarian government. In a democracy however, legislative mandates, and the manuals that follow, have little or no meaning unless the people at large are a party to the purpose behind the legislation and they are organised to help in its translation into practice. The moral is clear. We must

*Appendix IV.

pay attention to the training and education of popular representatives and the people they represent.

We have recognised that in the case of officials, the training and education should be conducted primarily in institutions run under Government, although there will be association of non-officials in order to inject the non-offical point of view in the training process. In the case of non-official representatives and the people, the logic is equally clear that institutions for their training and education have primarily to be run by non-official agencies although there should be close association of officials.

Which then is the agency that can sponsor, supervise, inspire and sustain the vitality of this non-official training programme from day to day without risking our national approach in the process? There is only one course open before us. We have the Informal Consultative Committee in the Parliament which, as you know, takes abiding interest in this programme. I propose shortly to constitute a training and education sub-committee of this Consultative Committee. A sub-committee of the State Consultative Committee may be organised in the same way at the State level. As would be the case in the Centre, the sub-committee of the State Consultative Committee can be presided over by the Minister in charge of Panchayats or Community Development, with the Panchayat Director functioning as the Secretary. Similar committees can be created at the District level. Where the Zilla Parishad has come into existence, there can be a training and education sub-committee of the Zilla Parishad with its Chairman as the President, and the District Panchayat Officer as its Secretary. Training and education sub-committees can next be created at the Block level, either of the Block Panchayat Samiti or of the Block Development Committee. The process can be carried the same way further down to the village level.

The Block level representatives, whether of the Block Development Committee or of the Block Panchayat Samiti, will organise camps and Sammelans in the villages for the education of the mass of our people in the philosophy of our

programme and the physics of its implementation. They will take the fullest assistance of the Government staff, especially those connected with social education, panchayats and the co-operative department. Some financial assistance will be made available for the purpose out of the Block budget. The Ministry will try to support this large-scale programme of training of popular representatives and the people at large by the production of adequate literature written in brief and lucid style, free from jargon and polemics.

[SEPTEMBER 1, 1959]

There have been piles of criticism against our programme since the Programme Evaluation Organisation's report. I came back from Mysore nevertheless with a robust confidence. My confidence is based on the progress already registered on the way to Democratic Decentralisation.

The Conference at Mount Abu last year cleared the cobwebs of thinking and accepted the proposition that statutory institutions supported by functional associate institutions of people should take up the initiative for the programme, making use of the Government agency as their instrument. It has been a year and a few months from Mt. Abu to Mysore. We have already begun to see practical expression of the concept in the legislation enacted, or in the process of enactment, in almost all States. The lead which the Mysore Conference has given is a significant step forward in the direction we started from Mt. Abu. The Mysore lead consists of concrete tasks assigned to village panchayats and co-operatives, the Block Panchayat Samiti or the Block Development Committee and their functional organisations. The primary role of the panchayats and co-operatives in the preparation and implementation of the village agricultural production plans was particularly emphasised. Furthermore, Mysore has stressed the imperative need for training and education of our workers as also of the people.

IV

A NEW DAWN

[OCTOBER 12, 1959]

SOMETHING of very great significance has taken place. Something much more than what we began on October 2, 1952. Something that approximates nearest, although on a different plane, to the event that overtook us at midnight on the borderline between August 14 and 15, 1947.

You will have read in the Press of the event that took place at Nagpur, in Rajasthan, on October 2. Nearly 3,000 odd Sarpanches representing all the panchayats in Rajasthan, 232 Pradhans of the newly elected Block Panchayat Samitis and 26 Pramukhs of the newly elected Zilla Parishads had gathered there. In the morning there was a crowd of nearly ten thousand at the Sammelan which I had the good fortune of inaugurating. In the evening the crowd rose to a lakh in that small desert village when the Prime Minister consecrated to the people of rural Rajasthan the powers to determine hereafter their own destiny.

Never have I known people in the seats of power undertaking voluntary liquidation of themselves. As I watched the vast gathering under the rising and setting sun, I had a sense of history flowing in my veins. Government officials can no more be what they had been. They have divested themselves of the armour to which they were used till October 2, 1959. It is only after getting rid of worn-out garments that one can put on new ones. New garments do not fit on old ones. The development under way will also affect the responsibilities hereafter of Ministers in the Centre and the States, Members of Parliament and State Legislatures.*

Andhra State went through the symbolic inauguration yesterday, by the Prime Minister, of its scheme of devolution and

*See Chart given at the end of the book.

democratisation which comes into force all over the State on November 1. Seven other States are preparing for the same consummation. The others are also moving forward.

[DECEMBER 2, 1959]

Things are moving so fast in the States in which the new pattern of administration is in operation, that it is no longer possible to comprehend the change round the conference table. One simple example will indicate to you the size of the problem that the changed context has brought about. The Director of Animal Husbandry in Rajasthan was perplexed as to what he should do for the next campaign against sheep epidemics in Rajasthan. His entire staff, from the district downwards, as also the budget, have now been transferred to people's statutory organisations. How does he convince the Panchayat Samitis and the Zilla Parishads about the imperativeness of advance anti-epidemic measures in areas which, according to his expert judgment, fall within the danger zone? The only advice that I could offer was that the Veterinary Director had to accept the challenge. He should convince the Zila Parishads and the Block Panchayat Samitis about the need for preventive measures. His superior specialised knowledge should enable him to do this. The Director accepted the challenge gladly. So also did his other colleagues.

Similar issues are being faced by Andhra, Assam, Madras and Mysore. Those States that come later on the road to people's democracy will have to grapple with them likewise. Democratic decentralisation thus leads at last to the real extension approach, for which we have in vain been searching till now.

In a totalitarian regime it is possible to let a hundred flowers bloom one fine morning. It is equally easy to let the hundred flowers wither away and drop down as dead petals some other day. In a democracy, however, no power on earth can get powers once delegated to contract. Let us have no illusions. Democratic decentralisation is but the first step. The next steps, and there will be many, will emerge till sovereignty begins to rest where it

really belongs. Starting from scratch, seven years of effort have brought us to a point from where we can have a glimpse of the road from the Lok Sabha to the Gram Sabha. Because the programme hereafter will involve statutorily at least 20 times the functionaries we now have in the Government agency in the Block, the programme will move in geometric progression.

With powers fully delegated to the States, the only two significant responsibilities that the Ministry can now discharge are training and the pooling and co-ordination of all-India experiences. We are planning our efforts and the organisation strictly with these two ends in view. An enormous expansion in the training programme is already in sight. It will come into full action during the early part of the Third Plan. We have had the first meeting of the Advisory Board for the Mussoorie Institute. During its recess from mid-December to mid-February, the Institute will work out its study and research programme on topical problems in collaboration with Universities, our own training centres and such State organisations as you can offer for this purpose. We are trying to draw up the full training programme we have in view for all the people, their representatives and the Government servants.

[MARCH 9, 1960]

It is now clear that all States in India without exception have accepted or will soon accept the concept of the three-tier system* of Panchayats, Block Samitis and Zilla Parishads. It is just a matter of time. My worry is only how to realise Panchayati Raj as the foundation of Indian democracy in which the people, their leaders and the people's servants can march hand in hand free from fear, malice, misunderstanding and conflicts—how to make sure that a spirit of camaraderie will dominate the pilgrimage.

You will soon be in Delhi with your Chief Minister to discuss the draft Third Plan at the forth-coming meeting of the National Development Council. The Plan is being drawn up with the highest emphasis on agriculture and industries. The social services

*Appendix V.

sector will be there, but to subserve production as the supreme priority. The Block which we have been struggling to make the unit for planning and development, will be so designated even more pointedly in the Third Plan. The fact that in a couple of years there will be no territory left outside of the Blocks will help strengthen the forces of co-ordination. Panchayati Raj should succeed in exerting further pressure in favour of centripetal thought and action.

Responsibilities of Panchayati Raj

But Panchayati Raj will not do this automatically. There has to be a discerning plan of action for the members elected under the new system. In the natural course of gravitation, these members will tend to lean even more heavily towards the amenities programme. But this way will lie disaster. For, it will degrade Panchayati Raj representatives into trade union leaders making more and more demands on Government rather than on their constituents. The scheme of democratisation in such an event will have misfired, and its purpose completely defeated.

The plan for sustained action by Panchayati Raj will necessarily have to veer round the production programme—production in agriculture, animal husbandry and village industries. The newly elected representatives will have to make demands on the people. Thus alone will the unutilised energies in our villages find a productive outlet. The amenities programme will grow as a spontaneous activity, consistent with the resources of the Block. There will also be mobilisation of departments through a new concerted pull which the people's representatives alone can exert.

In Parliament, we do not allow a Government officer to be criticised. The burnt is borne by the Minister concerned. The same is the case in the State Legislature. So should it be at the Zilla Parishad, Block Panchayat Samiti and the Village Panchayat. This, however, can happen only if the people's representatives have been trained effectively, and the servants of the people have also been trained alongside to understand their mutual rights and obligations in a democracy. In colonial rule,

Government servants are the Government; neither the people nor their representatives count. In a totalitarian system, the people's leaders and the people's servants meet in interchangeable roles. It is in democracy alone that the people, their representatives and the people's servants belong to individual categories, yet travel together on a common pilgrimage. Panchayati Raj does not mean abandonment of responsibilities by the people's servants. It means but a sharing of responsibility in a new context, with support for good actions and deterrents for bad ones.

[JUNE 27, 1960]

After we dispersed earlier this month from the Annual Conference on Community Development at Srinagar, the Conference of State Ministers of Co-operation began almost immediately. Now that I am back, I have been trying to have a view of these conferences in the perspective in which we function. We have accepted food production as the highest priority. We have agreed to make all else subservient to this supreme objective. We have undertaken to devise administrative measures to ensure that the programme in all the Blocks—pre-extension, first or second stage—is implemented strictly. The Co-operation Ministers' Conference has agreed likewise to make agricultural production the highest priority and to see that the co-operative movement is geared accordingly. Co-operatives henceforward must take up all service and distributive functions, besides expanded facilities for credit.

Between claims for assistance by individuals and those from co-operatives of the under-privileged, we undertook at Srinagar, after mature deliberation, to give preference to the latter. This is a vital decision, and it is in line with the aims and objectives outlined in the draft Third Plan. But decision in a Government conference is one matter, and its implementation on the ground is another. It is easy to help a rich man. He is but too eager to be helped. To help a poor man is a complex task. If help is given to the poor without preparation, it fails to get assimilated. What makes things even more difficult is the fact that

the rich can hoodwink the gullible poor to line up with them in their selfish tirade against the administration.

The task of helping the poor and the needy will involve numerous issues, both administrative and political. To you, I look for administrative measures. From others I will seek political support as a complement. The two efforts will have to blend together.

[SEPTEMBER 19, 1960]

Let me warn you in all seriousness that Panchayati Raj is no talisman. Our independence on August 15, 1947, did not cause a sea of milk and honey to flow all over. Panchayati Raj is but an extension of the independence which we won. It means the conferment by statute of the right to the people down below to face their own problems within their locality, with all the consequences.

Panchayati Raj is no substitute for administrative efficiency in the Government apparatus, or for technical knowledge and resources in the various technical departments which constitute the welfare arms of Government. Panchayati Raj in practice will mean a still further expansion in the needs and demands of the people. It will call for greater efficiency in the Government apparatus. If the people and their representatives are to be wise masters to guide, support and correct the administrative apparatus, a quick and effective programme of education of all popular representatives and the people is the essential pre-requisite. An elaborate programme in this behalf is now on the anvil.

You will have read about the debate that took place in the Lok Sabha about six weeks ago on the philosophy of Panchayati Raj and its progress in different States. You will also have read about the precedent created by the Speaker, Shri Ananthasayanam Ayyangar, in exercising his right as a member of Parliament to give his experiences of the working of the Panchayati Raj system in his own district. Miniature parliaments, he said, have grown in several Blocks in which the Government servants as also the

people's representatives were being made to give to their constituents an account of the progress as also of the reasons for delay or short-falls. There has been a clear mandate from Parliament for speedy expansion of the Panchayati Raj system in all States. The Congress Party in Parliament has sponsored a delegation to visit the States of Rajasthan and Andhra where the system of Panchayati Raj has been in operation now for about one year, so that all States in India could be given appropriate and timely advice for speedy implementation of this programme.

[DECEMBER 4, 1960]

Delhi has been chosen as the Regional Headquarters of the International Co-operative Alliance. The ICA, as it is popularly known, is an international federation of the co-operative organisations of different countries in the world. Alongside the headquarters of the ICA there will also be a high-level institute at Delhi for training in co-operation of representatives from the South East Asian countries. This has been made possible largely through a generous grant from the Co-operative Federation of Sweden, a very important member-organisation of the ICA.

In response to the desire of South East Asian countries the ICA organised a seminar at New Delhi last month. The Seminar concluded last Sunday. I participated in the concluding function. I was happy to be in the midst of fellow-workers from India and from many countries abroad. It was a thrilling experience to discover that although the countries varied widely in geography, culture, tradition and economy, the problems and the approach to a solution, as also the motivations, were more or less common. The seminar came to the same conclusion as we did through our parallel quest on community development. It was discovered, for instance, that the problems of co-operation are fundamentally the problems of management skill and leadership. Skill and leadership in turn are a matter of training and education —training of personnel and education of the membership and the people at large. Ultimately, integrity and efficiency in leader-

ship will depend on the enlightened response and initiative of the masses of the people who are the members.

Sahakari Samaj

Panchayati Raj can make little headway unless Sahakari Samaj moves alongside. Happily, a common Ministry in the Centre is responsible for both these basic organisations in the country. We have had a fairly hard time during the past two years in building up these departments in the Ministry. The basic staff is there at last, and the staff has been moulded into a team. I have no doubt it will give a good account of itself in the months to come. You have known the Vaikunthlal Mehta Report on credit. You have also seen the Nijalingappa Committee Report on Co-operative Farming. We have appointed three more working groups, one on processing, one on co-operative training and one on consumers' co-operation. We are also making a study of the various other aspects of the co-operative movement. It is obvious that we cannot have co-operation exclusively in some spheres of our economic life and private initiative exclusively in others. The co-operative sector has to percolate into all economic activities in a significant degree if it is to make its impact on the economy and the people.

You will see that basic studies are being made on all significant aspects of co-operation. Simultaneously we are trying to pursue, as vigorously as we can, the decisions we have already taken on credit, service co-operatives, co-operative farming and other aspects of co-operation. We are also making a special study of the States in India which are relatively under-developed in the co-operative field, because growth of co-operative activity cannot be left to depend on mere local strength.

[DECEMBER 29, 1960]

Farmers from all parts of India continue to call on me throughout the year at my residence. I have no right to talk of agriculture, horticulture, floriculture and animal husbandry, unless I practise these myself to the extent possible. I have lately

been taking a good deal of interest in all these activities. I find them extremely satisfying, and rewarding besides. I say rewarding, because these experiences give me first-hand knowledge of the problems which farmers have to contend with, also of what our experts do really know. I took no interest in the garden during the first four years of my stay in the same house. During the subsequent years I have been trying to live as an integral part of the life that grows around me. I find that I succeed in carrying much more effective conviction to those who visit me in the house now, than I could years ago when I only talked philosophy! So, here again is proof of the maxim, "An ounce of practice is worth more than a ton of professions."

Two Mistakes Rectified

New Year Eve is an occasion for rejoicing, also for heart-searching. There are two mistakes, I find, we did commit in our programme. The one was not to entrust the programme of development, as far as it lay within the confines of the village, to the panchayats regardless of the mistakes and even blunders it might have resulted in here and there. The second mistake was not to give adequate emphasis at the very start of the programme to production, particularly of food. It redounds enormously to the credit of our people, the representative institutions and the Government agency that both these pronounced failings in the programme are now earnestly being attempted to be made up.

Agriculture is already in the forefront of the programme of Community Development. With growth of resources in technical knowledge and supplies, this is a subject which should not cause us undue anxiety. The situation is not so simple so far as village industries are concerned. This calls for more complex organisation. Panchayati Raj is no longer a mere concept. A new partnership between the permanent official agency and the elected representatives of the people is being established. The sharing of the major part of responsibilities by the representatives of the people in Parliament and the State Legislature did not mean relaxation on the part of the Government apparatus; if anything,

it meant a deepening of knowledge, widening of resources and heightening of the tempo of effort. Similarly, Panchayati Raj will mean no relaxation for anyone. It will make similiar demands on both official and non-official agencies at all levels—State, District, Block and Village.

The Tasks Ahead

In three more months, the Second Five Year Plan will be over. The Third Five Year Plan will begin. Panchayati Raj will be firmly in progress in a major part of India. Our Ministry has been reviewing its role periodically in the context of the progress and the tempo of the movement; the call arises afresh for defining the role of the Ministry.

I am fairly certain, for instance, that in the Third Five Year Plan this Ministry should be mainly concerned with four aspects of the movement, at least in the years immediately ahead. The Ministry should serve first as a clearing-house in which the experiences of the States in Panchayati Raj and Sahakari Samaj can be pooled objectively, faithfully and effectively. The Ministry must next provide facilities for training and education. This should include training centres, as also audio-visual aids and literature to accelerate the process of training and education. The Ministry should then ensure that the people's organisations, panchayats, co-operatives and the associate institutions, have all been geared to the appropriate national priorities set from stage to stage. The present priority is production in agriculture and allied subjects. Finally, the Ministry should devise measures by which the weaker and the under-privileged sections of the community can begin to receive their due share of the bounties provided by nature and by the Government, without involving any serious social upheaval in the process. These to my mind constitute the four-fold task immediately ahead of the Ministry.

[April 30, 1961]

Till recently we had a government organisation from the Collector to the Gram Sevak, which could be stimulated and

spurred into action through official fiats, periodic seminars and conferences. These led to a common understanding of the programme from the Centre down to the ground. With Panchayati Raj institutions coming into the picture, an altogether new situation arises. We have now to face an additional hierarchy of non-official representatives of the people. This includes 300 odd presidents of Zilla Parishads and an equal number of vice-presidents; 5,200 odd presidents of Block Panchayat Samitis and an equal number of vice-presidents; about 2,50,000 presidents of village Panchayats and about ten times this number of Panches. We have, besides, nearly 200 million adults out of 350 millions of village people who will have a say in the Gram Sabha. All these have to be oriented to the new task. We have to get them to assimilate the philosophy and objectives of Panchayati Raj, and the complementary roles of Government servants, the popular representatives, and of the people. If this is not done speedily enough, the tempo of the programme will slow down.

Feudalism of the mind, like casteism and communalism, let us remember, is still very much alive in individuals, also in our body politic. Fourteen years of independence are not long enough to wipe off the hangover of centuries. We must scrupulously be on guard against all such subversive trends, or else we may wake up to rude discoveries. We abolished, after a long struggle, 550 feudal States on August 15, 1947. We should not be an unwitting party to the creation of 5,200 new feudal States with the Block Development Officer acting as the Dewan, the president of the Block Panchayat Samiti acting as His Undisputed Highness, and the village Mukhiya acting as the new Jagirdar. I am raising no phantom here. I have seen some eruption of this virus already.

Mahila and Yuvak Mandals

Panchayats and co-operatives by themselves will not carry us far. We must organise the two basic associate institutions at the village level which alone can impart vitality to the movement. The two organisations are the *Mahila Mandal* and the *Yuvak*

Mandal. Having seen something of what the *Mahila* and *Yuva Mandals* have already begun to accomplish in a small way in the very backward villages of Orissa, I am convinced more than ever of the imperative importance of these institutions.

Let me repeat, it is women through the ages who have preserved the culture and traditions of which we feel justly proud. It is the youth, likewise, which has imparted vitality to all progressive movements. India's decline began when we gagged and handcuffed our youth out of pseudo reverence for the elder, and when we imprisoned our mothers and sisters behind closed veils and gilded shutters in our houses.

[JULY 6, 1961]

We shall meet at Hyderabad for the annual conference a week from today. Conferences from the village up to the international level have grown by now to be a common feature, a new virus according to some. No matter what it is elsewhere, the national conference on Community Development has served as a special landmark for me and for others in the Community Development movement. My personal calendar year has always begun with the annual conference.

I find, as I look back, that the first conference of Development Commissioners at Delhi in May 1952 ushered in the Community Development Programme. The third one at Ooty in 1954 brought in the concept of the Block Advisory Committee. The fifth at Nainital introduced Panchayat representatives in the Block Advisory Committees and the entrusting of responsibility for local programmes to the panchayats, as against departmental operation. The seventh at Mount Abu endorsed the Block Development Committee as the precursor of the Panchayati Raj system recommended by the Balvantray Mehta Study Team. The ninth conference at Srinagar last year put the final seal of approval on Panchayati Raj as a system of local government for the whole of India. We are proceeding shortly to meet at the tenth conference. What is the landmark this might provide?

[AUGUST 14, 1961]

Nearly a month has passed since we met at Hyderabad. What did it offer us? The ten-point test for Panchayati Raj* is the new yardstick that emerged. If we can transmit the understanding of this from the Lok Sabha to the Gram Sabha, and to the Government agency all along the line, the relationship we crave for between the official agency and the popular representatives will then be a spontaneous growth. Panchayati Raj institutions can then offer patterns before which Plato's "Republic" will pale into insignificance.

The other crucial point that emerged out of Hyderabad, as I see it, is the imperative need today to develop the two vital associate institutions at the village level, namely the *Mahila Mandal* and the *Yuvak Mandal*. We cannot afford to waste a day over the starting of these institutions. They must begin with whatever activity they themselves would care to choose. Our organisation must extend the invitation, and such resources as we have to offer.

[OCTOBER 1, 1961]

The Prime Minister is making a lightning trip to Chandigarh tomorrow morning. I am also joining him. The event is the inauguration of Panchayati Raj after one full year of preparation —legislation, election, and training of all functionaries, officials and popular representatives from the headquarters of the State down to the village. From all indications, Uttar Pradesh will also launch Panchayati Raj around the middle of November. The Maharashtra, Gujarat and Bihar draft bills are in the Select Committee stage. Some time during the next year, all the States in India will have come within the operational orbit of Panchayati Raj. I find cause in this for jubilation, also for thanksgiving. It goes to show that the spirit of democracy in India is alive.

National Integration

A national conference has just been held in Delhi on national

*Appendix VI.

integration. Nothing during the past ten years, I feel convinced, has done more to contribute to national integration in the long run than the concept of the Community Development Programme and now Panchayati Raj. This programme is promising to bring about co-ordination between diverse functions and functionaries at diverse levels. It is bringing the people together for integrated development. A common administration from Delhi to the remotest and the obscurest part of India, with a common agency both official and representative, is getting into position. I would beg of you all to do your bit to ensure that the common nomenclature and designation for functionaries which are agreed to after long discussions at the national level, do get universally adopted in practice.

The Package Programme

We have just had in Delhi a week's seminar of the representatives of States on the package programme organised by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. Our officers participated in the proceedings closely; so did I. I came back convinced from this seminar that the package programme is indeed developing as a package within the package of the Community Development Programme. We had the National Extension Service as the first phase. The Community Development Programme was an intensification of the NES. The package programme should act as an intensification of the Community Development programme itself.

Students : A Neglected Group

I had yesterday a new experience of a visit to a college in Delhi where my youngest child is a student. I was there to give a brief exposition on "Community Development through Panchayati Raj". As I talked to the youngsters seated in front of me, I realised what a blunder we had committed in not carrying the student community with us. I have decided to try out a study circle on Panchayati Raj, Sahakari Samaj or Samuhik Vikas in the same college. We can assist through supply of literature and participation in discussions by the staff of the Ministry. The study circle can be followed by excursions of interested students

to some Panchayati Raj Blocks in the not too distant neighbourhood. Could you not likewise pick up a college near you?

[NOVEMBER 28, 1961]

Despite all pressure from friends in Parliament and elsewhere, we have all along refused to prescribe a common pattern of legislation on Panchayati Raj for the States. This has been the correct approach, as I see in retrospect; for Panchayati Raj can have no future unless the legislation, the administrative procedures and patterns are developed by each State thinking afresh on its own, though deriving the fullest lessons from others. The lawmakers and the administrators will have to respond faithfully to the reactions from the field, and not feel shy about adjusting themselves and their actions from stage to stage as the actual experiences dictate. Panchayati Raj will have to be a continuing process of action and reaction by the people at the one end and their representatives and the people's servants at the other, with progressive adjustments in approach and relationship. Only thus will the health of the movement be ensured.

Uneven Spread of Co-operation

On October 30 and 31 we had the annual conference of the State Ministers of Co-operation at Delhi, inaugurated by the Prime Minister. The conference brought to light the stark fact that four States in India accounted for more than half the activities in co-operation, while four others at the other end of the spectrum did not account for as much as one particular district in a particular State. Howsoever bright the statistical picture may look on the national canvas, these extremes in performance can be no matter of pride to us. It was a decision of the conference that a special inquiry should be made into the reasons for the backwardness of some of the States, and that urgent steps should be taken to correct the situation. We have had discussions since, with the representatives of the four States and also separately in the Planning Commission. We have agreed to special financial assistance being made available. It was recognised, however,

that financial assistance is the least of the pre-requisites. The basic issue is one of leadership in the co-operative movement.

Weaker Sections of the Community

The report of the Jayaprakash Narayan Study Team on the welfare of the weaker sections of the community has been submitted to Government. It has been widely commented upon in the Press and has raised many controversies. Since the recommendations cover the activities of many agencies, it will take some time to have the report fully processed. We have done preliminary processing of what pertains to the sphere of our own Ministry. It is quite clear that we can progress neither with democracy, Panchayati Raj, Sahakari Samaj nor with the socialist pattern unless the weaker sections of the community are enabled to claim their share and to assimilate it for growth in sound health. In this context, what applies to the weaker sections applies equally to the weaker areas within a State. The relatively strong and the powerful will move ahead on their own steam. It would not be legitimate for the Government organisation to claim credit for their progress; for they are powerful enough to move with the Government, or in spite of it if need be. The real test of a Government or a community lies in what it can do to enable the weaker members to overcome their weakness and be able to march in step with the others. This is where the Community Development agency, and for that matter the Government as a whole, is going to be tested in the eyes of the world today and of history tomorrow.

[DECEMBER 31, 1961]

The new year knocks at the door. Another general election will soon take place. The new year, and with it the new Government, must bring in new thoughts, new springs of action. I cannot somehow resist the impulse for reminiscence. It was ten years ago about this time that I was busy bundling my rags at Nilokheri. Ambassador Bowles had come on the Indian scene. The experiment at Nilokheri had come nearly to the end of its

tether. We had been planning over many years to extend the concept and experiences of Nilokheri. The U.S. offer of special assistance acted as a catalyst for the new programme. Etawah, Nilokheri and all other earlier experiences were distilled into the new programme. A period of ten years of the programme will more or less be over by the time the new Government comes in after the forthcoming general elections.

I would like to do a bit of digression here for a moment. I have a grand-daughter about two years old. We have been looking after her for nearly four months in the temporary absence of her mother away from India. From crawling, the child has learnt to walk on her own within the compound of our house. She has even begun lifting small tables and stools for herself according to her needs. She even places her dolls in the perambulator and pushes it around the house. My wife, I and all other members of the family have tried to give to this child, temporarily deprived of her mother, all the attention that we humanly could. This did help in amusing her from time to time; but even though days, weeks and months passed, we could not lure her from the memory of her mother. The child has taught me some lessons on community development. How foolish we are at times in searching for power-rigs to bore rocky mountains, when water the life-giving nectar may be flowing just below in abundance! To grow, the child must have the freedom of adventure, of actions from tiny to mighty ones. The child should not be uprooted from its mother.

As with a child, so with a growing nation. Wherever people have been inspired and allowed to think and act for themselves there has been real growth. Whenever the pattern, the programme and personnel have been rooted to mother earth, the growth has been spontaneous. Panchayati Raj three years ago was looked upon as a figment of the imagination by the bulk even of our own workers in the programme. Today even the revenue agencies, with all their reputation for orthodoxy, have begun to greet Panchayati Raj with open arms. I need not mention that all political parties from the most reactionary to the most pro-

gressive have hailed the programme. For years we struggled to get the people to accept the Community Development programme as their own. We failed. The moment Panchayati Raj came, people plunged headlong into the movement despite wide variations in their leadership.

The moral is clear. Cost what it may, people must have the opportunity to lift their burden themselves. We may watch and guide, as we do with a budding child. Let us give the child back to the mother. The child will then have natural growth which will endure. Let us delve back into our culture. Let us graft ideas, howsoever revolutionary, on to the old stock. It will lead to rapid growth and abundance of harvest. Continuing synthesis of the old with the new has been the soul of India. Let this natural gift in our character be allowed to blossom naturally. The community of India then will develop with spontaneity. We are struggling to achieve Samuhik Vikas through Panchayati Raj and Sahakari Samaj. Our ultimate success will depend on the genius of India discovering methods to promote leadership free of feudalism, leadership synonymous with service and rid of fear.

I mentioned at the beginning of this letter that the new year should soon be followed by new events pregnant with new potentialities. Ministries in the Government of India will bear their burden. Our Ministry will have to play a role significantly different. What it will be I do not yet know. The next few months should unveil the new phase of operations. Ten years of this pilgrimage will have been over soon, of which we have ample reasons to feel proud. The next ten-year phase must mean a leap forward. It cannot be a leap backward. Nor can it be *status quo*. Community Development and *status quo* preclude each other at any time, more so in the high flux in which we function today. Let me ring in the new year with the prayer that it will bring us realisation so that we can transcend fear and can transmit faith.

APPENDICES

Appendix I

ALLOTMENT AND COVERAGE OF BLOCKS

1. Number of Blocks into which the country has been delimited	5,223
2. Blocks allotted (up to October, 1962)	
(a) Stage I, II and Post Stage II Blocks	4,272
(b) Pre-extension Blocks	951
3. Total population of the country (excluding towns with population of one lakh or more)	3,340 lakhs
4. Population covered by Stage I, II and Post Stage II Blocks (Approximately)	28·3 crores
5. Percentage population covered (excluding towns with population of one lakh or more)	85
6. Total number of villages in the country	560 thousand
7. Number of villages covered (Approximately)	4·9 lakhs
8. Percentage of villages covered	88

APPENDIX II

SCHEMATIC BUDGET*

(*Rs. Lakhs*)

HEADS	Stage I Block	Stage II Block	Tribal Development Blocks: Stage I	Tribal Development Blocks: Stage II
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
I. *Block Headquarters*	3·15	0·85	3·65	1·10
(a) Personnel	2·60	0·70	2·60	0·70
(b) Transport	0·15	0·15	0·65	0·40
(c) Office equipment, furniture, etc.	0·15	—	0·15	—
II. *Agricultural Development* (including Animal Husbandry & Fisheries, Minor Irrigation & land improvement)	4·50	1·35	9·35	4·25
III. *Rural Arts, Crafts & Industries*	0·65	0·50		
IV. *Amenities*	4·30	2·30	9·00	4·65
(*a*) Health & Rural Sanitation	1·15	0·50	3·65	2·10
(*b*) Education	0·60	0·50		
(*c*) Social Education (including Audio-visual Aids and Women's, Youth and Children's Programmes):	0·70	0·50		
(*d*) Communications	0·85	0·50	2·85	1·50

*The Budget referred to here is only a nucleus one. It is supplemented in each Block by Budgets of respective Departments under the normal programme of maintenance and development in the Five Year Plans.

NOTE : An expenditure of Rs. 18,800 (Rs. 16,800 on Block Headquarters and Rs. 2,000 for Agricultural development) has been allowed during the Pre-extension stage which will be adjusted against the budget provision for the Stage I period after the Pre-extension Block is converted into Stage I.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
(*e*) Housing (Project and rural)	1·00	0·30**	2·50	1·05
Less Rs. 60,000 from Groups I & IV items in Stage I Blocks to be adjusted by the State Governments according to the relative importance of items.	(—)0·60			
TOTAL ..	12·00	5·00	22·00†	10·00†

**Rural Housing only.

†These figures are inclusive of a provision of Rs. 10 lakhs and Rs. 5 lakhs in Stage I and Stage II respectively from the Ministry of Home Affairs which has constitutional responsibility for tribal welfare.

APPENDIX III

PATTERN OF BLOCK STAFF

1. Block Development Officer	1
2. Extension Officer (Agriculture)	1
3. Extension Officer (Animal Husbandry)	1
4. Extension Officer (Cooperation)	1
5. Extension Officer (Panchayats)	1
6. Extension Officer (Rural Industries)	1
7. Overseer	1
8. Social Education Organiser	1
9. Mukhya Sevika	1
10. Gram Sevaks	10
11. Gram Sevikas	2
12. Progress Assistant	1
13. Accountant-cum-store-keeper	1
14. Senior Clerk	1
15. Cashier	1
16. Typist	1
17. Class IV Servants	4
18. Stockmen (Veterinary)	2
19. Messengers (Veterinary)	2
20. Medical Officer	1
21. Compounder	1
22. Sanitary Inspector	1
23. Lady Health Visitor	1
24. Midwives	4
25. Sweepers	2

NOTES : (*i*) During the Pre-extension stage, the staff comprises one B.D.O., one Extension Officer (Agriculture) and five Gram Sevaks.

(*ii*) The following additional staff will be appointed in the tribal Development Blocks at the discretion of the State Governments .

Medical Officer	1
Compounder	1
Midwives	2
Forest Extension Officer and /or Conservation Assistant and/or Ext. Officer (Agriculture)	1
Cultural Officer	1

(*iii*) Extension Officer for Fisheries and Horticulture may also be appointed, where necessary, without exceeding the pooled provision for expenditure on Block Personnel for the State as a whole.

(*iv*) Under Panchayati Raj, the staff under various development departments as also under previously existing Local Self-Government Institutions, if any, at the Block level and below, will be functioning directly under Block administration.

APPENDIX IV

SPECIAL TRAINING FACILITIES

Description of Training Centre	Category of personnel to be trained	No. of Centres functioning as on 31-3-62	No. of Centres likely by 1963-64	Period of training	Annual capacity as on 31-3-62
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1. Gram Sevaks' Training Centres/Extension Training Centres	Gram Sevak	96	100	2 years in Gram Sevaks' Training Centres (integrated training course)	4,350 (Gram Sevaks' Training Centres)
				6 months in Extension Training Centres (extension training)	1,800 (Extension Training Centres)
2. Home Science Wings	Gram Sevikas	43	69	1 year	1,675
3. Small Industries Service Institute	Extension Officer (Industries)	4	4	4 months	1,200
4. Khadi Gramodyog Mahavidyalayas	Extension Officer (Industries)	7	7	8 months	700
5. Health Orientation Training Centres	Health Personnel	3	5	8 weeks	630

SPECIAL TRAINING FACILITIES—(*contd.*)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
6. Orientation and Study Centres	Block Development Officer, Social Education Organiser and other Extension Officers, District heads of Technical Departments, Non-officials etc.	10	15	Orientation —1 month Job—2 months Study—3 weeks	2,400 (Orientation & Job) 1,200 (Study)
7. Social Education Organisers Training Centres	(a) Social Education Organiser	3 Social Education Organisers	3 Social Education Organisers	Social Education Organisers Job-6 months	Social Education Organisers Job-340
	(b) Mukhya Sevika	5 Mukhya Sevikas 5 Combined Units	5 Mukhya Sevikas 5 Combined Units	Refresher: 1½ months Mukhya Sevikas: 10½ months	Refresher. —680 Mukhya Sevikas: 410
8. Supplementary specialised training to Social Education Organiser to work in tribal areas (Ranchi)	Social Education Organiser for Tribal areas (both male and female)	1	1	3 months	120
9. Cooperative Training Centres	Extension Officer (Co-operation)	8	13	11 months	894
10. National Institute of Community Development (Mussoorie)	1. Key administrative and technical staff of Central Ministries & State Govts.	1	1	4 weeks	200

SPECIAL TRAINING FACILITIES—(*contd.*)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	2. Members of Parliament and Members of State Legislatures				
	3. Pramukhs & Pradhans of Zila Parishads/Panchayat Samitis				
11. National Institute of Community Development (Rajpur)	1. District Panchayat Officers	1	1	1. 1½ months	1. 120
	2. Teaching staff of Orientation and Study Centres, Social Education Organisers Training Centres, Extension Training Centres, Khadi Gramodyog Mahavidyalayas etc.			2. 3 months	2. 60
12. Panchayati Raj Training Centres	1. Block Development Committee members, panchayat samiti members, sarpanches and up-sarpanches	88*	100†	1. 1 week	N.A.‡
	2. Part-time panchayat secretaries			2. 4 weeks	

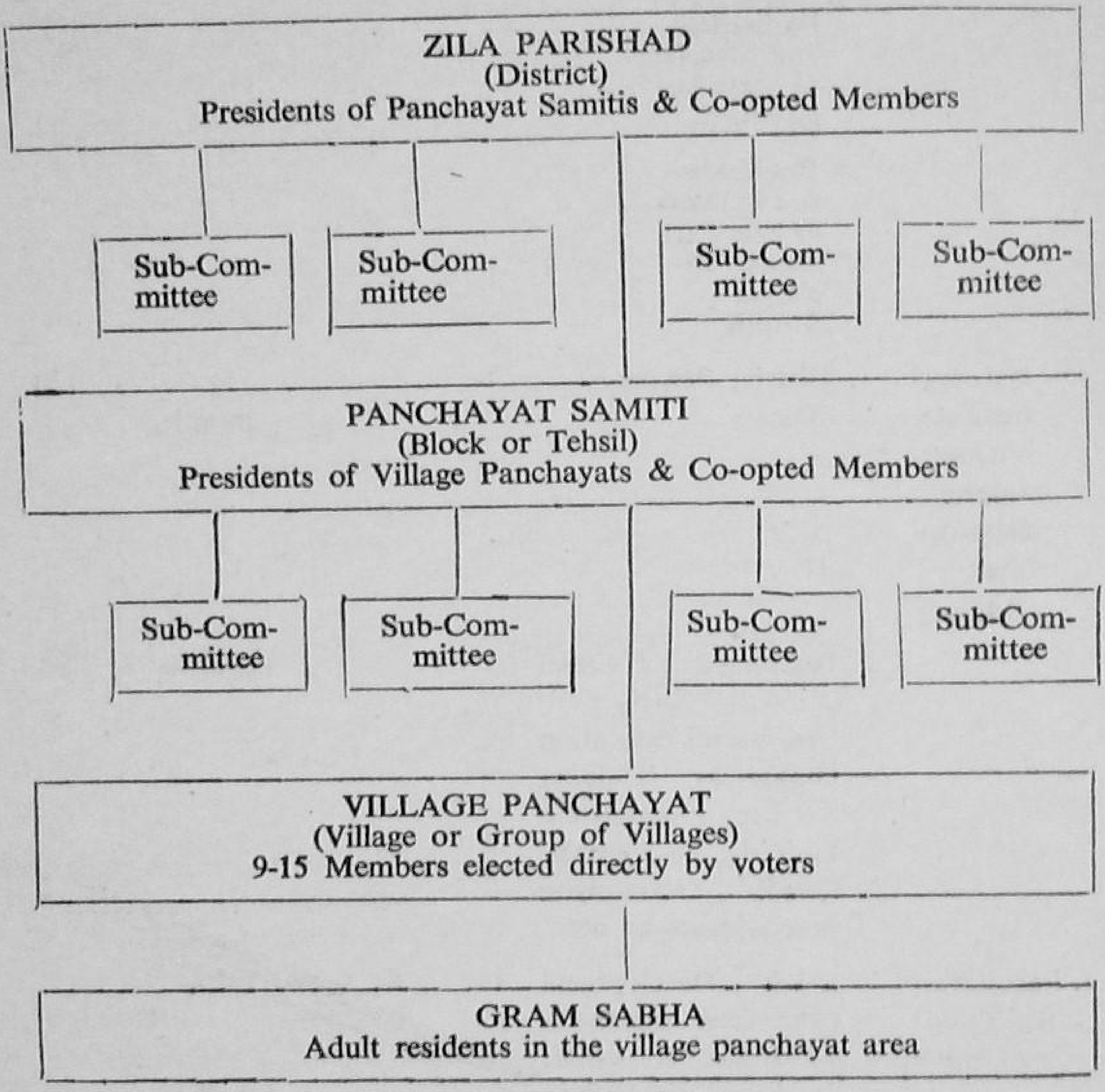
*Sanctioned upto 15th July, 1962.

†To be started by 1962-63, when the position will be reviewed again.

‡Annual capacity of each Panchayati Raj Training Centre is 1,040 for institutional training and 1,600 for peripatetic training.

APPENDIX V

PANCHAYATI RAJ SYSTEM



APPENDIX VI

TEN POINT TEST

The tests for a successful Panchayat were defined by the Annual Conference on Community Development and Panchayati Raj held in Hyderabad in July, 1961. These ten point tests are :

(*i*) Production in agriculture as the highest national priority during the Third Plan.

(*ii*) Promotion of rural industries.

(*iii*) Development of co-operative institutions.

(*iv*) Development of local resources including the utilisation of man-power.

(*v*) Optimum utilisation of resources available to Panchayati Raj institutions such as money, staff, technical assistance and other facilities from higher levels.

(*vi*) Assistance to the economically weaker sections of the village community.

(*vii*) Progressive dispersal of authority and initiative, both vertically and horizontally, with special emphasis on the role of voluntary organisations.

(*viii*) Understanding and harmony between the people's representatives and the people's servants through comprehensive training and education and a clear demarcation of duties and responsibilities.

(*ix*) Progressive increase of competence both in officials and non-officials.

(*x*) Cohesion and co-operative self-help in the community.

GLOSSARY

BHAJAN, devotional song.
CHAUPAL, village meeting place.
CHELA, disciple.
GURU, teacher.
KIRTAN, devotional singing.
MAHILA MANDALS, Women's groups.
MELA, fair.
PANCHAYAT GHAR, panchayat house.
SHRAMDAN, gift of physical labour, for construction work.
TORAN, decorated gateway.
YUVAK MANDAL, youth group.

INDEX

Abu, Mt.—Conference at, 95, 96, 112
Accountants—Need for, 48
Adimjati Seva Sangh, 95
Administration—Role of, 69, 70; and technology, 74, 75
Administrative Intelligence Section—Need for, 19
Agriculture, 65, 66, 91; and Community Development, 121
All-India Khadi & Village Industries Board, 16
Ambar Charkha, 80
Animal Husbandry, 65, 66
Annual Conferences—Review of, 124
Appleby Report, 14, 15
Aurangabad, 8
Ayyangar, Ananthasayanam, 118

Balwantray Mehta Committee Report, 83, 87, 89, 92, 106
Basic Village Institutions, 96
Batala, 4
Bevan, Aneurin, his impression of N.E.S. & C.D. blocks, 70, 71
Bharat Darshan, 54, 55, 101
Bharat Sevak Samaj, 7, 95
Bharat Yuvak Samaj, 95
Bhave, Acharya Vinoba, 83
Block Advisory Committees, 56, 57, 85; abolished, 95; and Village Camps, 73; Constitution of, 82
Block Development Committee, 95, 100
Block Development Officer, 87, 88; Role of, 55, 56, 67; Reports of, 82, 83; training, 5
Block Headquarters—Planning for, 2, 3
Block Samithis, 100
Blocks—Opening of new blocks, need for full staff, 79
Bowles, Chester, 128

C.D. and First Five Year Plan, 45, 46
C.D. and Second Five Year Plan, 12, 45, 49
C.D. and Third Five Year Plan, 108, 109, 122
C.D. Ministry, 61, 63, 128; role of, 105-108, 115, 122, 130; Technical Adviser in, function of, 107, 108
C.D. Programme—Real aim of 30, 31; review of five years' work, 84, 85; test of success, 36, 37
Central Institute of Study and Research, 97, 108, 110
Central Social Welfare Board, 95; and C.D., 67, 68 73, 74
Chanda Committee, 7
Children—Need for enlisting them, 11, 12
Collector—and block Reports, 83; and inter-State Seminars, 21; duty of, 4; importance of, 67; powers of, 6, 42; role of, 12, 55
Community Centres—Location of, 51
Compost Pit—Need for one for each family, 99
Consolidation of holdings—Advantages, 24
Co-operative Farming, 109, 120
Co-operative Federation of Sweden, 119

Co-ordination—between officials and non-officials, 46, 47

Development Commissioners—Delegation of power to, 6; role of, 12, 13, 17, 18
Djakarta, 37, 38

Economic Programme—Need for, 62, 63
Elections—and social education, 68
Expenditure—Budget for First Plan period, 3; need for diverting for pressing objectives, 3; Rules and procedures—simplification of, 7; shortfall in, 2
Extension Training Centres, 21, 110

Farm leaders' Camps, 83, 84; follow-up work of, 86, 87
Farmers—Excursion by, value of, 44, 45
Food production—Need for increase of, 90
Ford Foundation, 33
Foreign countries—interest in C.D., 40, 41, 55; *see also* under particular country
Foreigners—interest in C.D., 20, 34, 35

Gandhigram, 4
Government Servants—Role of, in free India, 29, 30
Gram Kakis, 96
Gram Lakshmis, 96
Gram Sahayaks, 93, 95, 99
Gram Sevaks, 9, 13, 50, 94; and Village camp, 72; function of, 22; importance of quality in, 76, 77; incentive for good work, 8; need for qualified personnel, 24
Gram Sevikas, 9, 25, 26
Gramdan Movement, 83

Heavy equipment—Use of, in villages, 23

Indonesia, 37, 38, 39, 40; C.D. in, 55
Informal Consultative Committee, 76, 81, 111
International Co-operative Alliance, 119

Jayaprakash Narayan Study Team, 128

Kasturba Trust, 9, 25
Khadi and village industries, 80
Kisan Melas, 32
Krishi Pandit, 99

Lincoln, Abraham, 46

Magan Chula, 33, 34
Mahila Mandal, 123, 124, 125
Maps—Uses of, 15
Melas—as medium for spread of social education, 28, 29
Minor Irrigation Works, 90
Mysore Conference, 112

National Cadet Corps, 7
National Development Council, 89, 90, 93, 99
National Integration and C.D., 125, 126
NEFA—Working of C.D. programme in, 34
Nepal—C.D. in, 55
NES Block—Budget, preparation of, 6; expansion, 1; location of, 9, 10; and C.D. blocks, distinction removed, 89, 93
Nijalingappa Committee Report, 120
Nilokheri, 34, 128, 129
Nizamsagar Project, 85, 86
Non-official Participation in C.D. Programme, 7, 95
"Normalised block", 63, 64

Orientation Programme—Importance of, 20, 21
Ooty Conference, 13

Package Programme, 126
Paddy—Japanese method of cultivation, 85, 86
Panchayati Raj—First inauguration of, 113; and national integration, 126; inauguration and working in different States, 113, 114, 115, 118, 119, 125; legislation—each State to have its own, 127; meaning and philosophy of, 113, 115, 116, 118, 119 to 123, 125, 126, 130; popularity of, 115, 124, 129, 130; responsibilities of, 116, 117
Panchayats, transfer to Ministry of C.D., 92
Parliament—Study Circle on C.D., 93
Parliament Members—Need for participation, 7, 8
Pilot Projects—Conduct of, 58, 59
"Post intensive block", 63, 64, 65, 93
Prime Minister and C.D., 18, 30, 32, 92, 99, 113, 125
Programme Evaluation Organisation Report, 112
Project Advisory Committees—Non-official participation in, 42, 43, 44

Rajasthan—Accomplishment in Minor Irrigation, 90, 91
Rajgir, 4, 8
Ramakrishna Mission—Offer of help to C.D. movement, 36
Reading habits, to be encouraged among workers, 59
Reports and Returns, to be minimised, 13
Reserve Force (Hyderabad), 7
Rotary Club, 7
Rural electrification, 22
Rural housing—Role of engineers in, 60; rural surplus to be invested in, 59, 60

Sahakari Samaj, 120, 122, 126, 128, 130
Samuhik Vikas, 126, 130
Sarva Seva Sangh, 95
Seminars, 8; importance of, 53, 54; importance of site; 8; importance of technical seminars, 70; inter-State advantages of, 21; regional or inter-State—syllabus for 4, 5
Shibirs and Training Camps, 32
Shramdan, 49
Social Education, 9, 17, 50, 51, 68; expenditure for, 41
Social Education Organisers, 9, 17; and village camps, 72
Socialist Pattern, 109
Staff—Expenditure on, 2; need for additional staff for collectors, 12
State Consultative Committee, 76, 81, 82, 85
Students' Camps, 5
Students' Study Circle and Panchayati Raj, 126

Technical Departments—Role of, 54
Training Centres—Need for, 33
Training and education of C.D. workers and public, 110—112

Unemployment—Relief for, 3
U.S. Extension Service, 18
U.S. financial aid—Extent of, 16
U.S. Technical Co-operation Mission, 16

Vaikunthlal Mehta Report, 120
Village—Improvement of life in, 33, 34; visitors to be received by village community, 26
Village camps—Organisation of, 71, 72, 73, 75
Village Co-operatives, 53, 56, 57, 65, 78, 86, 92, 94, 96, 99, 105, 117, 119, 120, 123, 127, 128
Village Industries, 2, 16, 52, 65; marketing of products, 79, 80; Village Industries Extension Service, 52
Village Level Workers, 9
Village Panchayats, 44, 53, 56, 57, 65, 77, 78, 82, 85, 86, 87, 92, 94, 95, 96, 99, 105
Village schools, 92, 94, 96, 99; as Community Centres, 51
Village Teachers—Role in Second Plan, 51
Villages—Delegation of powers to village bodies, 32; gulf separating them from cities 26, 27

Women—as Social Education Organisers, 17, 25, 28; attractions for women workers, 9; need for enlisting them, 11, 12, 96
Women school teachers—Services to be utilised, 28
Women's Centres, 25

Yuvak Mandal, 124, 215

LOCAL AUTHORITIES

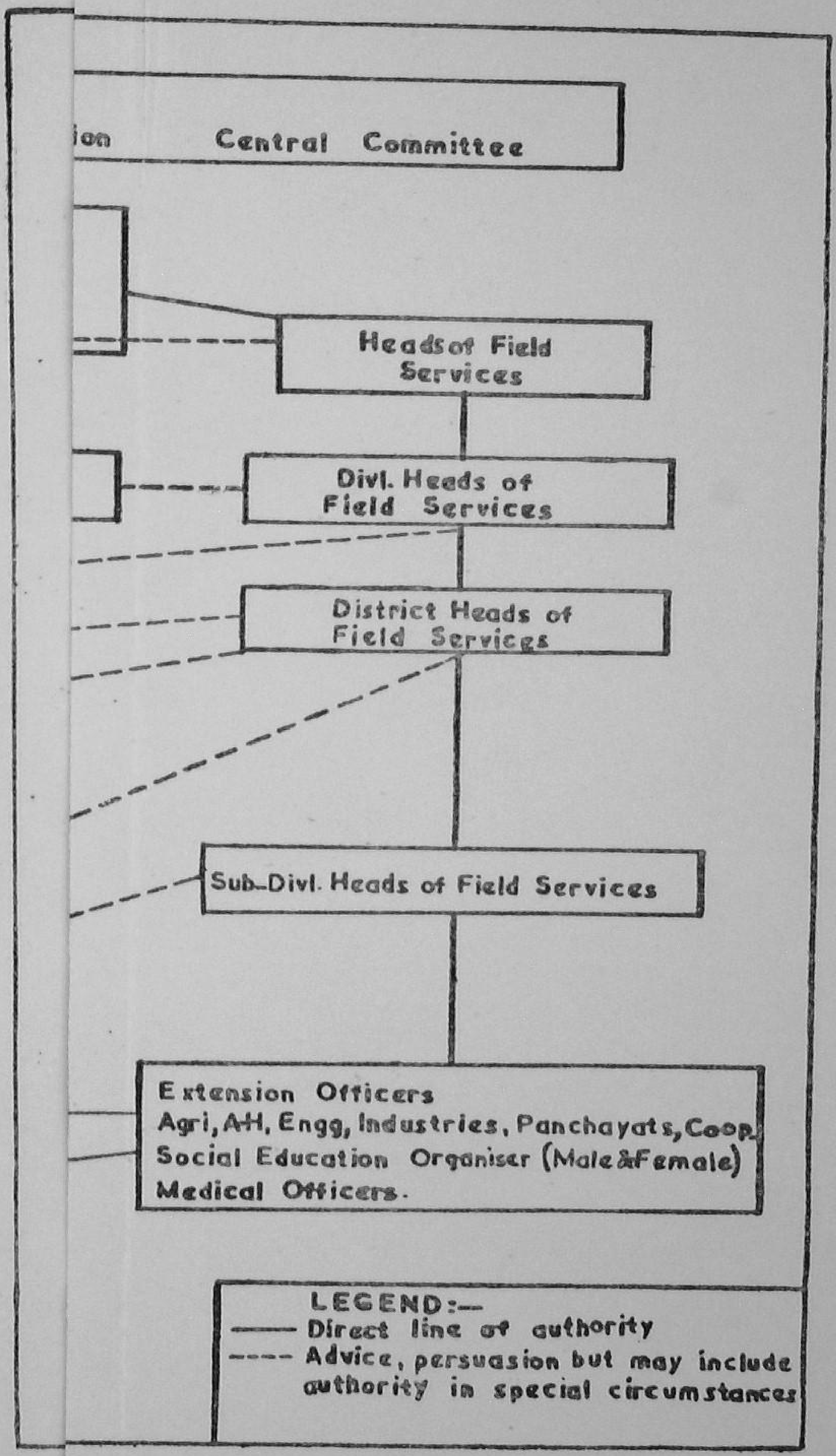


CHART INDICATING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOVERNMENT, LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND FIELD AGENCIES

Shri S. K. Dey was born in 1906 of a farming family in Sylhet, now in East Pakistan. An electrical engineer by training and education—B.Sc. from Purdue University and M.Sc. from the University of Michigan, U.S.A.—he worked for sixteen years in an Indian subsidiary of a foreign enterprise dealing with X-ray and electro-medical equipment.

With the coming of independence in 1947 he left his position in the company as Manager for India, Burma and Ceylon, and plunged into an experiment in the rehabilitation of displaced persons at Kurukshetra. He built up the pilot agro-industrial township of Nilokheri. In March 1952 he was appointed Administrator of the Community Projects Administration. Since September 1956 he has been the Minister in charge of the new Ministry of Community Development, Government of India, with the additional responsibility for Co-operation and Panchayati Raj which were later transferred to the Ministry.

Some of his books are: *Planning for Life; Community Development; Panchayat-i-Raj;* and *Nilokheri.*